Helene von Racowitza

PRINCESS HELENE VON RACOWITZA

Princess Helene von Racowitza

An Autobiography

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN

BY

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PART I

What I have to say—Why I say it—Theories of Suggestion and Heredity—My old home, and what people said about it—Memories of Paul Heyse.

CHAPTER I

THE following sketches are not intended for timid souls or conventional thinkers, nor for those who are prudishly inclined or narrow-minded. Such people had better not take up this book,—not even glance through its pages—for the result might be vexation of spirit!

My aim is not to shock my readers, but to warn them of certain things in life which are better avoided, or maybe to prove to them that, after all, the best thing life contains is courage to uphold truth, and to avoid lying in word and deed. This increases one's self-respect, helps one to keep friends and to appreciate them when one has found them.

The following reminiscences of a stormy life are offered for emancipated people—to those independent souls who, having reached the pinnacle which stands above all conventions, look forward to the time when each one will be free to form his own life according to his individuality, untrammelled by social or family prejudices; and to those who look forward to the time when woman will be no longer regarded as a household drudge, but as the comrade of man, not as his mere instrument of pleasure—or maybe even as his enemy.

Let me therefore once more warn those who are easily shocked not to read!

To the free and courageous I say "Read," but read with the desire to understand the true nature

of the author, as she follows the path traced for her by Fate, from heights to depths—even to the verge of the mire. The road leads eventually towards the Light, and remains therein!

I have tried in these pages not to make myself better than I am—but also not to depict myself worse, as many people have often shown me.

I must also beg for the wider toleration of my readers who wander through life's paths with me, if I find myself obliged to write about my personal charms with the same impartial frankness as I do of my faults, failings, and good qualities. I am compelled to do this, as my personal appearance has played such a prominent part in my life; I am *able* to do this because, in the first place, I am now an old woman, with hardly the remnants of my once vaunted beauty, and also because, even in the hey-day of my youth, I attached no great importance to it, but accepted it, like all beautiful things belonging to me, as a matter of course.

Indeed, I sometimes asked myself, "Would you admire yourself if you met yourself as a stranger?" I found no answer to this query, and left the opinion of my beauty to others,—wearing it myself with a careless sovereignty.

In apologising for this I must again beg the reader to understand the real reason why I so often—objectively—speak of it.

I should like to explain why I so often mention the people who played a rôle in my life more by initial letter than by name. It is because those who are still living, and are not connected in any way with art or literature, might prefer it. I therefore mention the full names only of those who are well known to the world. I have nothing detrimental to say of any of them, therefore they cannot object.

Does my story contain anything important enough to interest mankind—or perchance to help any reader over a dark hour? Yes, I think so.

Knowledge of human nature would be a very simple art, if man were an utterly different being at different periods of his life, for we should content ourselves with saying, "He is as he is, because he utilised these or those circumstances or natural gifts." Even if the result were no complete whole, we should seek nothing further than that which lies on the surface.

Whereas there is still so much left that is mysterious and hidden from our gaze and intuitive perceptions, that real knowledge of human nature is perhaps the most difficult problem that presents itself to the penetrating student mind of man.

For instance, there is the theory of heredity.

Can we tell from which unknown ancestor we have inherited this vice or that virtue?

Or do we know anything of the influences, evil or good, to which the being we might be analysing was subjected?

Can we explain the power of hypnotic suggestion, or the undoubted power often wielded by a strong, if evil, soul on another of superior quality, which is nevertheless unable to withdraw itself from the influence of that other? No! We know nothing about all this—or practically nothing.

To return to the theory of heredity. The wisdom of ancient India affirms that each individual is allowed the choice of its parents or ancestors, but that in our present existence we have no knowledge of this choice. Until a short time ago, we Europeans knew nothing about this theory.

We are souls or, according to Goethe, "intelligences" compelled by previous existences, and the qualities and defects we then appropriated to ourselves, to reincarnate exactly as we do.

This may be the secret of psychic inheritance which we often look for in the opposite scientific theory of *physical* heredity.

As the former is too occult to admit of more

than mere allusion in these pages, I must, since I am writing Memoirs, confine myself to the latter.

. . . . .

A strange mixture of blood flows in my veins. My father's family was originally a Swedish-Norwegian one—the Tönniges (as they were then called, and as a branch of it is still named) were direct descendants of the Vikings, and the fiercest blood of the wild Norsemen ran in their veins.

This was distinctly noticeable in my father, who in joy, as well as in rage, knew no middle course. When mastered by indignation, he gave way, as I have often witnessed, to ungovernable fury. When the ancient Vikings migrated to Germany, their Northern ferocity ought to have spent itself in the taming process of the Prussian discipline, for most of them entered the Prussian state service. On the maternal side, my father was descended from Lucas Kranach, and most of the members of his side of the family were dignitaries of Church or State. Unfortunately in my father's case, Norse blood alone seemed to flow, and to be transmitted to me, his first child.

There is a story told in the family about this "Viking blood."

We once met a very old relation in Nice belonging to the branch of the family that wrote the name with a "T," and had settled in the south of France.

The old Baron Tönniges was a tall, well-built man —an "original." He was dressed in the fashion of the 'forties—high, twisted, batiste neckerchief, long coat and vest—and excited no little astonishment in the minds of his younger relatives. His punctilious politeness was such that when my two youngest sisters, then aged four and five, stood up, he, then a man of seventy, rose also to show his respect for the sex, and remained standing until the little ones had either reseated themselves or left the room. To all

of us he was *le vieux cousin* and a rather comical person.

Once the old man told us an extraordinary story of how, when he and his twin sister were about three years old, they fought to such an extent that they had to be kept apart lest they should kill one another. Their mutual hatred was such that they had to eat at separate tables; even the presence of their parents could not keep this hatred within bounds. From their third year they never spoke to each other. They are, unfortunately, not the only examples of this kind; the same evil passions play a part in my family to this day, and to them Lermontov's words may be applied—"Great am I in love as in hatred." These Memoirs will show to what extent I was dominated by the Viking blood.

But to return to my parents. The "Young Savage," as my father's intimate friends called him in his university days, fell madly in love at the age of twenty-four, and married my mother notwithstanding the opposition of both families.

My mother belonged to one of the old and highly cultured Jewish families in Berlin, whose members, during the eighteenth century, gave to the world philosophers and poets,—such as the Ashers, Mendelssohns, Beers, and even Heinrich Heine.

Her delightful home was the resort for eminent artists and brilliant women, such as Henriette Herz, Rahel, etc.—and for those then known in Berlin as the "Aesthetes." Her mother, my adored grandmother, was one of the most beautiful, witty, and highly educated women of her day, accomplished alike in music, philosophy, and literature.

Her family was as proud as any noble one of its pure Semitic blood, and could boast of the ancient privilege of placing the "hands of blessing" upon their graves.

CHAPTER II

My youthful parents, who adored each other, went to Munich at the wish of the Crown Prince Max of Bavaria who reigned as king from 1848-63. Previous to this, at the age of twenty-three, my father had been appointed Professor of History at the Berlin University.

His subsequent career in the service of the kings Max II. and Louis II., was passed partly in the Foreign Office, and partly as the representative of Bavaria at foreign courts, until his death in 1872.

I quote these facts from notes in an old family chronicle which unfortunately has been lost.

I must now condense a few facts which may describe my old home, and will quote what friends have said about the house of Dönniges,—and about my father in his official capacity.

"The sudden death of Dönniges, our Minister to Italy, of smallpox, reminds us of the time when, as a young man, he first came to Munich, and inaugurated a scheme of work which proved most beneficial. If Bavaria, during the decisive years of war, remained true to the Empire, it was due to the initiative of Munich; and as this was of the greatest importance to Germany, Dönniges' activity deserves recognition.

"When a young Professor in Berlin, he was chosen as tutor to the Crown Prince of Bavaria, who was an enthusiastic admirer of his frank and genial nature, and of his cultivated mind. When the Crown Prince

Max returned to Bavaria after his marriage with the Prussian Princess Marie, he requested Alexander von Humboldt to recommend him a man able to help him in his studies, and to be at the same time his counsellor and friend.

"Humboldt proposed Von Dönniges, who at once went with his young wife to Munich, where he occupied a most influential position when Max II. ascended the throne. It was he who guided the Cabinet more or less, who summoned to the University and the Court the brilliant assembly of eminent men of science, philosophy, literature, and art—prominent among them being Liebig, Pfeiffer, Carriere, Bluntschli, Dingelstedt, Geibel, Heyse, and many others—and who helped to form the King's mind, and make the epoch unforgettable for all who were connected with it.

"Dönniges was prime mover in most things, when at the Court gatherings scientific problems were discussed and defined, new theories propounded, new poems read. He was also the life and soul of the autumn hunting parties where the King was on friendly terms with those around him. The opposition party known as the 'Blacks' wrote, however, in their jealousy: 'A duobus D et uno T, Libera nos Domine.'

"The two D's were Dönniges and Dingelstedt, the T was Von der Tann, then the King's adjutant and Dönniges' intimate friend, who proved himself so capable as Commander-in-Chief of the Bavarian Army in 1870.

"Of course all the native talent of Bavaria gravitated round these chosen few,—names such as Kaulbach and Schwind may here be cited. It was not astonishing that Munich soon attracted universal attention as a centre of art, and thus the character of its inhabitants was modified and changed in a manner not unimportant to the development of German history."

In his own house, my father was invariably amiable, gay, and a perfect host, ably seconded by his clever wife, and their house parties brought together the élite of the aristocracy, as well as the most eminent minds of the day.

His life was thus entirely absorbed by two interests —his state and personal duties at Court, and the cultivation of his own interesting social circle. There was no time left for his children, except the moments when we—and especially I—saw him as host in his own drawing-room.

My mother was as fully occupied, for very soon she became the intimate friend of the Queen; and her children were left entirely to the charge of tutors and governesses.

Dingelstedt, who considered that with my father's departure from Munich the most hospitable and interesting salon there ceased to exist, wrote the following about my parents in the *Munich Picture Book*:—

"I felt most at home and happiest at the Dönniges', whose bright and charming wife Franziska furthered my interests among all classes with the greatest energy. She upheld me through joy and sorrow at a time when I was a victim of Court intrigues, woven with the deftness of a Penelope, which almost decided me to leave. Dönniges also stood by me then through thick and thin."

In those days father and mother seemed to me an ideal couple. During the short hours we were together my beautiful and amiable mother was kindness itself, playful and indulgent, even in my maddest moods.

I admired papa's cleverness, and was fascinated by his beautiful voice; it rings still in my memory as clearly as in my childhood's days, when he used to tell me fairy tales, or vied with his guests in improvising and composing verses.

At his famous evening parties, when all "New

Munich" was present, it often happened that towards the end of supper, warmed by my father's celebrated "bowl," by the fiery glances of pretty women, and the animated conversation of witty men, he or Dingelstedt gave a theme which was taken up by one of the poets present, and treated for hours in improvised verse full of wit.

Let me quote a few words to show how all this impressed outsiders. Baron Otto von Völdendorff says in his *Chit-chat of an old Munich Citizen*:

"Frau von Dönniges, who was so greatly gifted, was, perhaps even more than her clever husband, the centre of that brilliant circle, which a jovial monarch had attracted to his capital in the 'fifties. The following lines are written, not only in honour and gratitude to the departed, but as the memento of a memorable period in the history of Munich."

Let me pass over the political and intellectual, and confine myself to the social life, whose brilliant centre was to be found in "New Amalia Street, No. 66."

The Munich citizen, as are all South Germans, is a homely being, rather exclusive, and not at all hospitable.

Thirty years ago, almost the only evening parties were given in the salons of the *haute volée*. Daily social intercourse was almost unknown. Frau von Dönniges had the courage to introduce among us the Berlin "tea evenings," but she was too sensible to give us the *spree-soirées* with their weak tea, mild poetry, cold collations, and barren intellectual exchange. It is true that the tea-urn sang in her hospitable drawing-room, but this was a mere detail, as an excellent supper was provided with Bavarian beer, and a "bowl" brewed from the host's special recipe, moreover cigars were allowed. Those evenings will never be forgotten by those who had the privilege of being admitted to the charmed circle, where intellect, wit, and art ruled the hours. Hardly any celebrity

who passed through Munich in those days failed to become a visitor in Frau Franziska's drawing-room.

The reception-rooms were furnished according to the ideas of elegance then prevailing. Nowadays, when Gothic and Renaissance Art treasures adorn so many homes, the red velvet drawing-room furniture, long *étagères*, and straight looking-glasses, the boudoir with its blue wall paper and Napoleonic sofa, and the dining-room with its sphinx clock and stiff-legged chairs and tables, would appear tasteless. But in those days one knew no better; it seemed then of more importance that the occupant of a chair should be clever and amusing than that the chair itself should be of a certain design. Any acquaintance was free to appear every evening that Frau Franziska was at home. This fact could be ascertained from the street by the lighted windows. Twice a week one was quite sure to find the mistress of the house, and the host also, provided no command of the king caused his absence. Conversation was general. People sat, or came and went as they liked, conversed with whom they chose, seldom leaving before one o'clock in the morning. A special programme was always observed on Monday evenings,—a lecture, or a reading by various guests in turn.

Frau von Dönniges received her guests with a friendly handshake, whilst her husband gave a satirical and good-humoured greeting.

It was on these evenings that I made the acquaintance of many famous men, poets and artists, and learnt the art of conversation. If a stranger was present, the evening was devoted to him. On one occasion Hans Andersen told us his charming fairy tales; on another, Rubinstein let loose a volume of sound under his magical fingers; or Hebbel, with his vast projecting forehead, read to us, as if volcanic power animated his glorious dramas.

It was indeed worth while sharpening one's wit in

a company of beautiful women such as that by which the Dönniges were habitually surrounded.

Sometimes charades were acted (not the usual kind resorted to by those who use them as a last resource on stupid evenings); those acted in this house were more like the famous *commedie di repente* when Philip IV. heard the plays flow first in improvised rhyme from the lips of his *ingenui* Calderon, Cervantes, and Lope de Vega, before they were acted in public. Strange to say, it was the serious lawyer Bluntschli who was the most eager to enter the lists. He devoted himself as zealously to this task, as he did to his legal work. It amused him to match his wit against the others, and merriment reigned supreme.

Sometimes the hostess would say, "Children, to-day I have a surprise in store for you!" In one instance this proved to be the famous hunter and naturalist, Dr. Gemminger, who brought with him a small bat which he thought would interest those present. Shrieks arose from all the ladies, who hastened to protect their hair with handkerchiefs, fichus, or mantillas!

"Oh! My bat does not merit such a reception," said Dr. Gemminger; "she is as illustrious among her species as a Liebig, a Kaulbach, or a Bluntschli here!"

The ladies were consoled, and the Doctor took a little bat out of his coat pocket, and placed it in his hand. The little animal looked round, flew about the room, approaching all objects with the curiosity peculiar to the species, but without touching anything. Then it circled round the chandelier, and upon a whistle from its master returned at once to his hand, where it quietly supped on a meal-worm and drank water from a tiny bowl, looked at all present with its clever, old-fashioned little face, then disappeared, amid universal admiration, into the naturalist's coat pocket. He was proud to have

proved that even a bat can sometimes be superior to its reputation.

Everything that happened in this brilliant circle was as original as this little bat episode; even in the game of "Consequences" the questions were answered by witty remarks or rhymed sentences. Kaulbach, instead of using words, expressed himself by means of delightful drawings. During supper a battle of wits was kept up, but political and scientific questions also were frequently discussed. Deep silence reigned when the poets Geibel, Dingelstedt, Heyse, and Bodenstedt began to improvise. What costly gems of poetry were strewn on these occasions, which unfortunately were never handed down to posterity! Only the enthusiastic praise of those present rewarded the gifted poets.

In connection with the *Old Münchner* narrative, I should like to add a personal reminiscence regarding Paul Heyse. One day as I sat over a trifling task in the drawing-room with mamma, and while papa had a visitor in the room opposite, papa came in and said quite excitedly: "Fanny, young Paul Heyse is with me. I will bring him in here, but don't show any astonishment, for you have never seen such a handsome fellow! He is simply an Apollo."

Mamma laughed, and I, who was eight or ten years old, I forget exactly which, looked up at the gentleman who entered with papa.

Yes, indeed he *was* ideally beautiful! Had it been a few years later, I should certainly have fallen madly, if vainly, in love with him. He spoke of his young wife, who was a native of Berlin, and also of his stories, and was at once invited to bring the former, and read from the latter, at our next evening party.

He accepted, and the works he chose were *The Blind* and *L'Arrabbiata*. I was allowed to sit in the blue boudoir, and raved for months afterwards about Paul Heyse.

All this will describe the house and the surroundings in which I grew up. The children of these poets, artists, and nobles were my companions, and with a few exceptions are my friends to this day. I had been surrounded since my birth by an atmosphere intellectual, artistic, and beautiful; this influenced my future tastes and the development of my personality.

PART II

In the arms of the Queen—King Louis II. as child and playmate—Hans Christian Andersen's visit—Forced betrothal—Departure for Berlin—At grandmamma's—Yanko von Racowitza enters my life—Return home to Italy.

CHAPTER III

I NOW turn to my earliest childhood—to certain episodes which will perhaps not be devoid of interest.

The first of these was, of course, told me in later years. Individual memory can hardly be said to exist in extreme youth—certainly not consecutive memories.

Here is my first independent memory! I see a fire raging before me, and my grandmother bending over me in her night-dress as I sat on the window-ledge—I remember nothing else. Later on I heard that I was then about seven months old, that a house in our neighbourhood had been burnt down, and that my grandmother had, in her anxiety, carried me from my bed to the window.

My next personal recollection comes a few months later, when I wanted a stuffed bird on the top of a heavy cabinet, and my uncle, who was young and careless, nearly overturned the cabinet in the gratification of my wish, and covered me with his coat, terrified lest the heavy piece of furniture should hurt me.

I mention these earliest reminiscences, because the development of the youthful individuality is now considered a fashionable theme of interest; it was, so to speak, catastrophes of life and death which created my first clear impressions.

What now follows is drawn from stories that were told me.

When I was about ten months old, my parents were staying with the royal couple, Crown Prince and Princess Max and Marie at Hohenschwangau. My mother had left me with the nurse in the garden of the little castle, but the nurse had gone off leaving me alone.

In an adjoining avenue the young Crown Princess was walking up and down, when a child's cries attracted her attention. She hurried in the direction of the cries and found me, whom she recognised at once, lying on the grass. The great lady took me up compassionately, tried to comfort me, and carried me in her arms towards my mother, who now hastened in our direction. Before giving me up, the Princess took my baby fist, shook it at mamma and called out:

"Little Helene must not be deserted like this; she is born to be loved, and will cry herself to death if she is left alone."

This little anecdote of my earliest life was often told me by my mother.

Ah! how often have I wept bitterly in later years when I was deserted by those who ought to have loved me; but in those days no kind princess came to take me up and comfort me in my loneliness, —and the "princes" who offered themselves for this purpose understood the terms "love" and "to be loved" in quite a different sense from that of the kind fairy of my earliest days.

Among the independent memories of my earlier childhood's years, the most prominent place is given to the beautiful time of my friendship with the Crown Prince Louis—later King Louis II.—if one may qualify with such a serious epithet the companionship of such youthful beings.

King Max II. had succeeded his father Ludwig I., who abdicated in consequence of the Lola episode in 1840, and my parents belonged to the intimate circle of the youthful monarchs who were universally

beloved. I was chosen as the most fitting comrade for the Crown Prince.

We met often and were initiated together, by his kind governess Baroness Mailhaus, into the deep mysteries of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Notwithstanding the quantities of toys at the disposal of Prince Ludwig and Prince Otto, our favourite games were of a fantastic kind. "To be fairies" was our highest ideal. Curtains and *portières* were transformed into flowered garments and wings, in which we draped ourselves and became the heroes and heroine of many a fairy-like and wonderful adventure.

Perhaps it was in those days that the seed was sown in us both, which in him blossomed later in the wonderful attraction exercised upon him by Richard Wagner's dramatic art, and placed me on the boards of a famous theatre.

Our friendship lasted for many years, and I remember many traits of this king, who later on was so genial, and was finally so unhappy.

He was brought up very strictly, and taught especially to be polite to his inferiors. Another game of ours was that of leaning out of the window and spitting; I have no doubt this was instigated by me.

Of course Baroness Mailhaus was well out of the way. One day my father's old man-servant walked past and received our unwelcome gift upon his head. We nearly died with laughter, whilst the old man, raising his eyes, called out angrily, "Who on earth is doing such a filth——," when he recognised the Crown Prince and broke off hurriedly.

Our joy was of short duration. Fate overtook us in the shape of Baroness Mailhaus, who laid hold of us both and forced us to confess; this we did, trembling, but also rejoicing at the success of our feat. She looked very stern, and calling the old man-servant, she ordered the Crown Prince to apologise. Of course I was obliged to do the same. The old man was

much touched and abashed, but when he left the room and we faced each other with scarlet cheeks, the Crown Prince whispered to me, "It really wasn't nice of us. I am sorry for the old man, and will give him a present."

Another brilliant idea of ours was to decapitate some large and beautifully made tin soldiers. Suddenly I remembered that in Andersen's charming fairy tale of the tin soldier, he develops such a tender sentiment for the little paper dancer, that eventually he melts in the oven; and that now in consequence I looked upon tin soldiers as living beings. I told the story to my little royal friend, who suddenly began crying bitterly in the middle of our game, because we had killed so many splendid little soldiers. I wept as many scalding tears as he, until I—being the elder—realised that these tin soldiers could not possibly be, like those in Andersen's fairy tale, alive; and I began to console him.

He agreed with me, and we were soon merry over some other game.

This delightful friendship was one day ended in a quarrel which arose over a picture book.

Who *wanted* the picture book, who *had* it, I no longer remember. What I do remember is, that we were suddenly fighting, that I punched the Crown Prince, and he, being in the end victorious, pulled out a handful of my red-gold hair and held it in his little fist.

Baroness Mailhaus could not separate us, as we fought like two wild-cats. Suddenly the Queen stood before us, and exclaimed, "Children! How can you—are you mad?" Queen Marie was a most beautiful and charming woman, and I adored her. Her presence brought me at once to my senses.

Both sinners burst into tears; the great lady spoke kindly to us, and made us beg each other's pardon—make friends—and then my governess came to fetch me home.

When my father heard of the quarrel—in spite of the forgiveness of the royal parents, who regarded the quarrel as childish nonsense—the intimate intercourse between his Crown Princely Highness and my "wildness" was broken off. After my father had spoken very seriously to me on the subject, he added, "One does not thrash one's future king. You are not worthy of this privileged intimacy."

Ah! this cost me many tears, for I loved the royal prince above everything, and now I was only allowed to visit him on his birthday or name day. On those occasions, as he was forbidden all sweets, I took him the only thing permitted—a *bonbonnière* with chocolate drops, which he divided between Prince Otto and myself. We grew more and more estranged, although to this day my heart still holds deep affection and admiration for the unhappy king. He has no doubt forgotten me! Much later, when I was a widow, he sent me by his Field-Marshal, Von der Tann, bonbons from his table with the words, "*Greeting to my once wild little playmate.*" This ended my childhood's dream in the royal palace.

CHAPTER IV

ANOTHER reminiscence is of a visitor to our house who greatly interested us children. I mentioned that our father had brought us up on fairy tales—Grimm's amongst others, and more especially Andersen's; and now Hans Christian—as we preferred calling Andersen—was coming in person as a guest to our house.

During his return journey from Italy to Copenhagen he had been stung by a poisonous fly, and was obliged to remain for some time with us in Munich. What an ideal friend he was to children! My delight knew no bounds. Quite early in the mornings, while mamma was still asleep, I could torment him at my ease, and he told story after story. He turned everything into a fairy tale. It was even more fascinating when he revealed himself as the "Student of little Ida's flowers"; that is to say, while he was telling stories, he cut out the most fascinating things with scissors — castles, gardens, flowers and butterflies, elves and gnomes—in fact, all kinds of wonders. For many years I treasured a butterfly on whose outspread wings a fairy danced. This has vanished since, like everything that was best and most beautiful in my life. This man on first sight was positively repulsive; so that I, with my precocious sense of beauty, found difficulty in getting used to his appearance. He was received and fêted like a prince in the intellectual circle of poets and learned men of Munich. He called me his little

fairy on account of my flitting hither and thither, perhaps on account of my sunny hair, which I wore down my back. I was always with him, either holding his hand or seated on his knee.

He also told his wonderful fairy tales in the drawing-room, and moved his susceptible listeners to laughter and tears with fantastic and satirical recitals. Just those stories, however, won the most applause which seemed to me the least attractive; these I thought merely pretty tales. I can see again the assembly before me in the drawing-room laughing heartily over the "Swineherd" and "the Princess and the Pea." In later years I have often heard Wilhelm von Kaulbach and Justus von Liebig quoting from the latter story, "So, now she can stand without and sing, 'Oh! my dear Augustin, all is over,'" and the sensitiveness of the "Real Princess" was a household word in the whole circle.

Of course in such company and amidst all these celebrities I heard many things that were not good for such a young and impressionable creature as I was to hear. One must agree with me when I say that the *milieu* in which I grew up was the best imaginable for the cultivation of a sense of the beautiful, for intellect, artistic fantasy, and social breeding, but the *least* favourable for all one understands by the term morality.

CHAPTER V

A VIVID temperament was mine! Let me say at once that I was an excitable, unusual creature, wild and easily aroused—readily thrilled in all my senses—"soaring heavenward, smitten with deadly depression," that was for me already true, even at the age when others are still devoted heart and soul to their dolls. It urged me, even when I was six years old, to little love affairs with the brothers of my girl friends.

This is what I saw in our salon, where the majority of the celebrities already mentioned—above all my own father—carried on, either openly or in secret, liaisons with the ladies, or at least indulged in obvious flirtations, as they are now called—or courtships, as it was expressed in those days.

Amid all the fine speeches that were exchanged, and eagerly absorbed by my quick ears, many a fiery look, many a covert pressure of the hand, and many a secret kiss did my precocious eye detect.

Interesting and instructive this company most certainly was; but conducive to sound morals and cleanliness of spirit it emphatically was not.

This was the wholly irreligious—or rather, the a-religious—atmosphere in which I grew up. A little Bible history was all I ever heard of religion. But often I heard mocking, contemptuous discussions of the fasting, church-going, and confessions of one of our governesses, who was a Roman Catholic.

This embittered me, for I was kind at heart, and

felt how tactless and insulting were such commentaries. Also I never remember that anything in our house was considered reprehensible except "bad manners," awkward speech or intonation, all and sundry that jarred upon the sense of beauty.

In my father's as well as in my mother's family, there was an absolutely fanatical love of beauty. Morals were of secondary consideration. Lying was one of the things that were strictly forbidden. In my case it was unnecessary, as lying was not one of my faults.

The instruction I received at home was just as erratic as everything else. A German and a French governess looked after our languages and elementary instruction. There was also added to these a tutor, a little music, and a year in an "institute" — from which, at the request of the Principal, I was withdrawn, since, as she said, I learnt nothing, was always busy with imaginary things, and prevented the other girls from learning.

This much for my education. One subject really interested me—that was natural history; and also the German classics. In my tenth year I knew almost by heart Körner, Schiller, Kleist, and much of Goethe. I recited them with much dramatic instinct when I gave readings, both to my contemporaries and in the circle of my elders. This at least was an advantage I gained by keeping my ears open at home.

My love for natural history, and especially for zoology, was awakened by Dr. Gemminger of the episode of the little bat, already mentioned. I always loved animals intensely, and in this was warmly encouraged by my father, who shared my taste. Thus Dr. Gemminger was always allowed to bring me all kinds of animals, and as he always explained everything about them to me in a way at once fascinating, learned, and clever, I soon knew more about forest and field life than of ancient and modern history.

I was perhaps eight years old when Dr. Gemminger brought me a dead squirrel, saying, "Now we know how it, the little fellow, lives and moves, let us see what he looks like inside! That is just as interesting."

In this manner I made my first dissection. He showed me the heart with its valves, the lungs with their bronchial connections, the stomach, its cause and effects, and laid the foundation for the study of medicine which attracted me so much in later years.

Otherwise, no value was attached to definite knowledge, and by and through books I learned very little. All the more I was vividly interested in the profound mysteries of life, as I suppose most children are from whom sexual things are only half hidden, as was then too often the case.

From my tenth year my friends were mostly considerably older than I, and a little later they were often found among newly married women, and I was initiated by them (and by one in particular) into the mysteries of sex.

I do not wish to defend the lady who thus initiated a young child in secrets usually first known by those of much riper years, but equally I should not like her to be unjustly accused. There was in my earliest youth, and there still survives in me, something that draws women to me, and moves them to entrust me with their inmost confidences. They found in me, although I was then half a child, a ready and complete understanding, that was never shocked, even by astounding revelations; and probably this made it easier to confide in me. I distinctly remember the day when the foundation was laid to all my future life.

This occurred on a clear summer evening in the garden. My intimate friend—a Countess K., about nineteen years old—had told me all the incidents of her wedding night. She suddenly began to weep, and said sadly, "Men are so wicked! I

found out I was not his first love. He has loved many other women in the same way."

Hereupon I asked the amazing question, "Why don't you do the same? What *he* does you can do also!"

"A woman dare not, or the world will ostracise her," said the Countess.

"I should like to find any one who would prevent *my* doing what I wished! And as for the outcry in the world—well, one must pay no heed to that, so long as one does right," I exclaimed.

"Well, I should not consider it right," she said hesitatingly, "unless it were done in secret, and so that none should know of it." (She, poor soul, was since ruined by acting up to this view.)

"No!" I exclaimed indignantly, "I don't mean that at all! On the contrary, one should do it quite openly, to show that a woman has the same right as a man; both are human beings, and if it is in nature, as your husband asserts, then it holds good for man and woman."

It was on that clear summer evening that I was first convinced of the equality of the sexes. My frankness was abnormal, and I had a passion for unmitigated truth which frequently made my actions appear worse than they were. I shall often refer later to this characteristic of mine, and should like to impress the fact on my readers that it was, even at this early age, one of my most prominent traits.

CHAPTER VI

In my more than peculiar up-bringing, if one may even call it so, it is not astonishing that I was taken to private balls at the age of twelve and was allowed to play the "grown-up." From that time, so to speak, I was made love to "officially." In order to describe the impression I then made, let me quote the words of Baron Völdendorff, who speaks of me in his *Remembrances of an old Münchner.*

He says, after a few introductory lines: "I entered the blue drawing-room, but my feet were arrested on the threshold by a wonderful picture. The sun's rays fell on the figure of a young girl who sat in the window niche—a girl of such extraordinary beauty that I instinctively held my breath in order not to disturb this creature out of a fairy tale. Dainty and winsome as a fairy, with sharply cut profile, in which the slightly aquiline nose and the finely drawn mouth were conspicuous, she sat or rather reclined in the chair, her little head drawn back, as if by the weight of the glorious golden hair; her eyes were bent dreamily on the distance. And what eyes! Later on I often looked into them, but do not yet know what colour they are, whether grey, blue, or green. They continually changed colour; sometimes they wore the most gentle dove-like expression, sometimes—particularly when the heavy lids half hid them as if in fatigue—they flamed like eyes of a beast of prey. It was apparently a child of fourteen years of age, but she was developed like a

girl of eighteen. At the noise of the closing door, she turned her head towards me and said with the greatest *aplomb*, 'Mamma is not here, but she will come directly—do sit down.'

"I mentioned my name, upon which she made a graceful bow, and I greeted her with the words, 'I suppose you are the Helene we have been expecting from Berlin?' 'Quite right,' was the reply, and thus I beheld for the first time the enchantress Helene, who in later years was so passionately beloved, and so bitterly reviled.

"Those who have not personally known Helene von Dönniges can scarcely understand the magical power she was capable of wielding over the hearts of men. I often said to her jokingly, 'Like your famous namesake you could surely cause a Trojan war. But you would be capable of a higher art than hers; for on returning to your Menelaus, after a ten years' absence with the lordly Paris, and many other lovers, he would be sufficiently in love with you to forgive you all, and joyfully return home with you once more.' I for one, at least, have often tried hard to be angry with her, and I *was* as long as I did not see her. But when I spoke to her again, and represented to her face to face her abominable behaviour, I was compelled to relent when she naively declared that she could not understand wherein she had erred. 'One cannot be angry with her, she is as she is: ought one to blame the panther for following his instincts as beast of prey?'"

Such was Baron Völdendorff's opinion of me!

At that time—being then only twelve years old—my mother forced me into an extraordinary engagement.

During a journey through Sardinia, my parents became acquainted with a widower of forty-two, who, according to my mother's ideas, was extremely handsome. I believe he was really in love with my mother, who was herself a beauty, and being unable

to marry her, was unscrupulous enough to try and wed the daughter. As to how far my father was responsible for this folly, I cannot tell; but knowing him as I do, I think he did not trouble himself about such matters. Nobody seemed to know whether the wedding was to be postponed until I was of marriageable age; but in any case it amused my mother to pose as a young and beautiful mother-in-law to a sympathetic man who was her admirer. My betrothal took place. They filled my head with confused notions of marriage, married life, the bearing of children, and such things, at a time when I should have been busy with my lessons, so it is hardly surprising that I did not say no to their mad project.

I was delighted to receive the burning love-letters of my fiery Italian, to show them to my young friends, and to feel myself envied by them.

I had not yet seen my destined husband. As commander of the fortress of Alessandria, he could not easily get leave. For the present, all the pleasure I got out of my engagement consisted in fantastic pictures which my mother was never tired of describing to me, to prove how charming it would be that I, still almost a child, would be called at balls "Frau Generalin — Your Excellency"; how my elderly, rich, and aristocratic husband would overwhelm me with all the goods of this world. Only an old man really understood how to love a woman and to make her happy. Every moment of his life he is grateful to her for her favour, even if she herself has no great feeling for him. In short, the future was sketched in radiant colours, and in imagination I always pictured myself in velvet and jewels, surrounded by lackeys and every conceivable oriental luxury.

Here I should like to tell of the terms on which I lived with my brothers and sisters, and the other inmates of the house.

I was adored and spoilt by them all, and at that time also by my parents. Much later, when I was finally separated from my family, and was discussing the severance with an old comrade of my father's, I was told, "It is simply incomprehensible when I remember how your parents adored you! Your father would have fetched the moon and all the stars from heaven for his little 'Helena' if she had wished it. You were simply his idol. How could he treat you so in after-life?"

I was, in spite of being a little headstrong and full of mad freaks, at heart a tractable child, and easily led by affection. Later, when I was grown up, our two old governesses confessed to me that they had never loved any of my brothers and sisters as they had loved the wild, but good-hearted Helene.

I was far more developed than my brothers and sisters. My second sister, who was scarcely a year younger than I, had left home when four years of age; my mother made a present of her to one of her childless brothers, where she was brought up surrounded with love and luxury, and married when sixteen years of age a rich landed proprietor in Poland—Baron von K. Poor, charming, pretty Marie died when only eighteen years of age at the birth of her first child.

With the other brothers and sisters (there were seven of us) the difference of age was too great to allow of anything but a kind of playful intimacy. The person who cared for me most was my mother's old maid, Thérèse, and she played a certain part in many years of my later life, as will be seen in this absurd betrothal incident.

The old Italian bridegroom arrived, but did not conquer. He terrified me by his gigantic bulk and horrible black beard; and finding no sympathy with any member of my family, I clung to the faithful old Thérèse. Her advice, if not exactly moral, was

sincere, and seemed to me inspired. She had studied my mother's character for a long time, or rather fathomed it, with the silent jesuitical knowledge of human nature which servants, and indeed all those in dependent position, often possess. She had no love for her mistress, but understood how to combine affection with interest, and so made herself necessary to my mother. As regards this projected marriage she, together with all the other servants, was entirely on my side. During the Sardinian journey she, a bigoted and fervent Catholic, had learnt to know and hate the old Italian. His cynical atheism had inspired her with horror. She comforted me, saying :

" *We* (for it was understood that Thérèse was to accompany me) will marry him because we must! The Frau mamma is too mad on the idea ; no prayers can help as here ! But never mind ! The dear God and the Holy Virgin will know all about it, and soon send us some one else who will suit us better ; then we will run away. Or, if nothing else helps, I am sure the heart of Jesus and the beloved saints will not consider it a sin to kill such a horrible creature, who mocks at heaven and hell. Anyhow, we shall manage to become free. Naturally, there will be hard times to begin with."

CHAPTER VII

The intervention of my grandmother ended the engagement, or at least postponed it. She came and spoke authoritatively to my parents: "The child must continue her studies for the present. I will take her with me to Berlin. *Vedremo più tardi.*"

And so it was! The Italian returned to his garrison and I accompanied my grandmother to Berlin.

There all kinds of serious studies were taken up, or as serious as possible when my disposition is considered. I was very quick to learn, and tasks were mere play to me. Taubert was my pianoforte master; playing seemed as light a matter to me as one of his children's songs. All this knowledge was, however, most superficial, as was proved by the fact that after a few years I entirely gave up my music.

My master for German and Literature, also my Russian Professor (for this language I studied with great readiness) were astonished at my abnormal memory; to read a page twice, especially in verse, was enough to imprint it upon my memory. Languages and declamation became a passion — French, English, and Italian, together with Russian, I studied with my young friends. My German master was always delighted with my compositions,—most of which I scribbled a quarter of an hour before lesson time.

But, to my exuberant and imaginative disposition,

this more serious side of life was only of secondary importance.

I was longing for a romance and imagined many, for one can hardly say that the flirtations with cousins and friends were love affairs. They were sensual enough, however, to be rather more than schoolgirl ravings.

I must have been a strange girl, for although I was barely fourteen (it was just before my Confirmation) I made such an impression on the youths I have already mentioned, that they adored me, and expressed their feelings in songs and poems. Even older and more serious men vied with them in paying court to the "red nixie." The nickname "nixie" dates from a little episode which took place on the Tegernsee, and which I was very fond of relating in Berlin. I was only ten years old, and was sitting in our boat-house on the Tegernsee in the sunshine, dangling my bare feet in the water. Felix, the son of the famous Ignace Moscheles (who was then twenty years of age, and who became later a famous painter in England and America) came up to me with his fishing-rod, smiled, and declared later, that he had fallen in love at once with the little golden-haired thing. The young man was anything but good-looking, with his sharp though interesting features. I was sorry for his ugliness, and addressed him thus: "Isn't it awful to be so ugly?"

"No," was the ready reply, "Not as long as there are such charming little nixies whom one can look at, catch, and paint when they put such impertinent questions."

I was ashamed, and we made friends. He soon became an intimate in my parents' house, and later on I sat to him for many studies whilst Bodenstedt, Dingelstedt and my father read aloud, or Moscheles played the piano. I particularly enjoyed the chocolate he gave me in return for accompanying him on his sketching expeditions through forest and field.

The "Nixlein" exercised her charm on the hearts of older men in Berlin. There was one particularly handsome young man, who made such an impression on me that I let myself be carried away by a semi-romance. As he was married to a rich though ugly wife, nothing came of the "flirtation," as *he* called it. Later on I realised there had been a certain danger for me in it all. He was a very clever, enthusiastic student of philosophy, and so we remained good friends and raved together over Literature and Art. Even in those days I loved to read aloud, and this remained one of my accomplishments, as my enthusiasm for the classics was in its first and fullest bloom. I very soon found in grandmamma's house there was a replica *en petit* of my father's salon.

At that time my love for the stage developed itself. When six years of age I had been taken for the first time to the ballet in Munich; and after this everything was transformed for me into a poem of movement, and every circumstance of my life and fancy was illustrated by me in dancing. I gave everything a dramatic setting, and imagined myself as the heroine of the most impossible adventures.

The ancient Greek statues which I now learned to know in the museums became as living things and friends to me.

Ah! How intense was the feeling of delight during the hours when I approached the tragic forms of Antigone, Maria Stuart, Clärchen and Gretchen!

Few can have experienced such joy and sorrow in their poetic conceptions as I lived through with mine.

As I have already said, my love for the stage and for artists developed more strongly than anything else. I fancy that this enthusiasm in me for all that was great and beautiful in art was one of my chief attractions to the young men of my acquaintance. They felt that beneath my *joie de vivre* there lay a deeper note of true admiration for everything that

was noble and great. This perhaps was the secret of the attraction I had for a young Rumanian friend of my cousins—Prince Yanko Gehan Racowitza. He could only speak broken German, but the eloquent glances from his expressive dark eyes spoke to me of his admiration and enthusiasm. We were much together, but at that time he seemed to me only a boy. Perhaps the intensity of expression in his eyes contained all the longing and passion that were crowded into his brief earthly existence. Later he played a powerful rôle in my life, but at this time he meant little more to me than a welcome opportunity for practising my French. His musical talent made a great impression on me. This fifteen-year-old youth was all music; in him, with his gipsy temperament, all was transmuted into sound. He had a sweet voice, and played the piano and violin with great taste.

After a year and a half in Berlin my grandmother returned with me to Italy, where my father was Minister in Turin to King Victor Emmanuel. Here I was immediately introduced to the real *grand monde*, and the days of my childhood were over.

PART III

The Intoxication of Youth—At home once more and in the "great world" of Turin—Move to Nice—Life there —Lord Bulwer Lytton—Meyerbeer—The Empress of Russia—Grand Duchess Helene and others—First love —Separation.

CHAPTER VIII

I WAS not very happy at first under my father's roof. The dreaded Italian wooer arrived almost at the same time in the *villeggiature* of the Vallisa Alps, where my parents passed the summer and autumn. My aversion to him became boundless as he permitted himself little intimacies. Indeed I was infuriated when he tried to exercise his prerogative as bridegroom for the purpose of caressing me. He was odious to me, and I showed him this plainly. My mother, to whom he complained about my exaggerated prudery, persuaded him it was merely my extreme youth and German virtue, and would disappear with marriage.

Society returned soon afterwards to Turin, and here life became more interesting. Cavour, the genial Minister of the Re Galantuomo, was an intimate friend of my father's, and he, with a number of eminent men of that time, visited us frequently. I was regarded by them as the affianced bride of a high Italian official, and as such I was taken to the very simple court of Princess Clotilde—later Princess Bonaparte. She, as well as her father and brother, was quite bourgeoise—extremely ugly, but clever and most amiable.

Count Cavour stood in the foreground of all that was interesting. I particularly recollect one dinner-party at our house. Among the guests, besides the Count and my dreadful fiancé, some members of the *Corps diplomatique* were present. I sat between the Colonel and an English attaché. The conversation

was held almost exclusively between Cavour, my father, the beautiful Princess Ratazzi, and my mother. From time to time Count Stackelberg, the Russian Minister, threw in a joking word. It was said of him that he possessed the three most beautiful things in Turin—the finest dogs, the finest horses, and the most beautiful wife, all of whom were equally clever and treated by him equally badly.

At that time—it was in the winter of 1858—the political complications had arisen between Italy and Austria which led to the war in upper Italy in 1859. The conversation turned almost exclusively upon these topics. People said that Princess Ratazzi had been a political spy at the court of Napoleon, therefore she was competent to speak when politics were discussed. I chatted now in German, now in English with my young neighbour, pointedly ignoring the Italian, noticing how he boiled with rage and cast angry glances at me, but I took no notice of him, glad to escape his odious attentions for a few hours.

Dinner was hardly over when my father and Cavour were commanded to the king; my fiancé called me into a room, and without the slightest preparation attacked me thus:

"You have behaved like a *cocotte* with that Englishman; I will call him out; I will beat you."

As I had not the faintest idea what he could mean by the word *cocotte* the epithet did not affect me in the least, but I was most indignant at his threat of beating me, and was as wild as a young tigress. I raged, he bellowed, and hurled the coarsest epithets at me, all referring to erotic matters, most of which I failed absolutely to understand. Hitherto my ears had been kept free from all that was coarse and ugly; now a flood of it burst over me with elemental brutality. Much later I understood these and similar scenes, when I recalled them to memory.

Just then grandmamma entered, attracted by the shouts of the excited man, and promptly put an end to the disgraceful scene. She led me away and insisted on the Colonel's departure next morning, without his having seen me again.

My time of suffering, however, was not yet at an end. My mother persisted in her wish for this marriage, and my father left her free to act as she chose.

Grandmamma now played a trump card! We all travelled to Alessandria, where the Colonel was commander-in-chief, in order, as the clever woman remarked, "to see what he was like on nearer acquaintance."

His surroundings were magnificent, and he overwhelmed his little fiancée with jewels and costly gifts; his subordinate officers adored him, and the poor prayed for him. Everything was on a large scale—if in somewhat rough style.

On the whole there was nothing much to be said against him, although grandmamma saw well enough that neither the man nor his entourage—wherein God and women were spoken of with equal levity, and none but gross material interests were known—were fitted for her adored grandchild. Life just then seemed to me utterly grey and without hope—a sad condition for a mere child.

CHAPTER IX

Deliverance came in the following winter when my mother could not endure the rough climate of Turin; and thus all of us, with the exception of my father, who was bound by his duties at court, moved to Nice. Ah! How lovely life seemed now!—Dreaming under orange trees in my beloved sunshine, far away from that dreadful Colonel. We arrived there at the beginning of January, the best time for the Riviera. The lovely stretch of country from Cannes to Bordighera was not so built over and spoilt as it is now. The *Promenade des Anglais* and the *Quai Massena* formed the "Corso" then as now, but inland towards Carabassel, and behind and beyond the port, all was pure "nature." We lived at the end of the *Promenade des Anglais*—next the Var, a few steps from the sea, in a large Italian villa surrounded by orange trees; sunlight and warmth surrounded us on all sides.

My father soon followed us; now he drove to and fro between Nice and Turin to his duties. He was a splendid rider, and I received riding lessons. The third time I sat in the *manège* a mad cavalcade was formed and I was allowed to join it, much to my father's pride and to the horror of some German cavalry officers who foresaw me with a broken skull, or dragged upon the ground from the horn of my saddle. But nothing of the kind happened; my friends took care of me and all went well. After that I was one of the maddest riders in that mad

and joyful society. A certain interesting Baroness U. made verses on us all, and said of me—

"Es strahlt in gold'ner Aureole
Die Dönniges, ein schönes Kind
Erst 14 Jahr doch ganz erwachsen,
Mutwillig wie 'ne Hand voll Wind."

How grown up I appeared may be seen from the following little incident which took place at my first ball in Nice. At that time the cosmopolitan banker A. had a lovely German wife, *née* Baroness v. Kaula. Being very young she was as yet a little unaccustomed to entertaining. She had left cards at my parents' house, and then sent invitations for her big ball, which opened the season, to the Bavarian Minister and his wife.

Mamma had broken her arm, and it occurred to papa to take me instead of her. I entered the ball-room on papa's arm, dressed in white with white roses in my hair, and in an enormous crinoline which was then *de rigueur*.

The beautiful hostess approached me at once in order to welcome the "ambassadress," and said after the first greeting, "How young you look. I hear you have such a large family!"

I thought she was talking of my brothers and sisters, and answered, "Yes! five girls and two boys."

"Really! One can hardly believe that you already have seven children."

Presently the situation was explained, much to my amusement and to her perplexity. Often I have laughed at the little contretemps; and it was a great joke in common society that the fourteen years old Helene (who had never had a child) was the mother of seven.

The cosmopolitan crowd then in Nice was in many ways worthy of notice. Celebrities from all parts of the world were there, and I have never beheld such a number of beautiful women and girls all

together. Let me mention a few of the celebrities I saw at that time. There were Bulwer Lytton, Meyerbeer, Lord Brougham, Dickens, Prince Barclay de Tolly, the old King Louis I. of Bavaria, the transitory King Max II. From the Russian Court there were the old Empress of the Russian Court, widow of Nicholas I., the glorious Grand Duchess Helene (Princess of Württemberg), and the ideally lovely Grand Duchess Constantine, who expected her witty consort in Nice, as he commanded a portion of the Russian Fleet that often lay at anchor off Villefranche.

It was a brilliant and distinguished assembly that met in those days on the shores of the Riviera.

In the foreground of my memory stands Bulwer Lytton. What I now relate took place at the end of the 'fifties.

Bulwer was already past his first youth; his fame was at its zenith. He seemed to me antediluvian, with his long dyed curls and his old-fashioned dress. He dressed exactly as in the fashion of the 'twenties, with long coats reaching to the ankles, knee breeches, and long coloured waistcoats. Also, he appeared always with a young lady who adored him, and who was followed by a man-servant carrying a harp. She sat at his feet and appeared as he did in the costume of 1830 with long flowing curls called *Anglaises*. To me, who hated every kind of pose, the famous author seemed ridiculous, as did later Oscar Wilde with his train of adoring women.

In society, however, people ran after him tremendously, and spoilt him in every possible way. He read aloud from his own works and, in especially poetic passages, his "Alice" accompanied him with arpeggios on the harp. If at that time I had had any understanding of the mystical and occult side of the great man who had penetrated so deeply into the mysteries of the unseen world, I should have honoured him, and tried to learn from him; but at

that age *Zanoni*, and all his other works, were looked upon as merely clever fantasies. It was only much later that I developed an understanding for these subjects. At that period all society was deep in materialism. In any case, the author Bulwer was more interesting than the man Lord Lytton.

This was not the case with Meyerbeer. The animated and witty composer was very attractive socially, and my parents were as fond of him as of his operas. I became very friendly with his amiable and clever daughter Cornelia, who later on married the famous painter Richter. Every day she took long walks with her father in the country surrounding Nice and sometimes I was allowed to accompany them. But as Meyerbeer was mostly in the throes of composition during these walks, it was strictly forbidden to utter a word. Cornelia's father really only took her with him to prevent his falling or having an accident, as he generally rushed onwards with wide-opened eyes which beheld nothing but their own imaginary world. This enforced silence for hours did not suit me, and so I soon gave up these walks.

The first time Meyerbeer visited our house a little episode took place, which he often referred to with laughter, adding that he really believed he had entered a mad-house.

My father gave us all nicknames, which generally had reference to something he had been reading, or to personal names which had struck him. At this time the little daughter of my Italian Colonel was on a visit to us. Papa, on account of her coal-black eyes and brown complexion, had christened her the "Queen of Golconda," whilst his two youngest girls — at that time aged four and five — were called "General Bem" and "Little Dutch Beastie Kneppelhaut." The three sat in the sunshine before the villa when Meyerbeer called.

"Well, and what are your names?"

The unexpected answers were:

"I am the Queen of Golconda."

"I am General Bem."

"And I, Dutch Beastie Kneppelhaut."

This gave rise to his idea of having entered a mad-house.

We had glorious evenings when Meyerbeer played us parts of his new works, and Baroness Vigier (once in full fame at the Paris opera as Cruvelli) sang to his accompaniment. She was just as beautiful a woman as she was a great singer, and after marrying the wealthy Baron Vigier was one of the greatest entertainers in Nice.

Lady Brougham, with her husband the famous statesman, likewise received all who had name or fame in the Nice society. She was very fond of giving fancy-dress balls, and of choosing personally the costume in which her guests were to appear, in order fully to carry out her ideas.

Once I had to appear as Satanella, another time as Welleda—she declared she saw me as such, and so I was obliged to realise her dreams. As Lord and Lady Brougham generally received on Saturday evenings — but according to English custom grew "pious" and closed the house punctually at midnight —all their guests usually adjourned in a body to the neighbouring house of my dear friend, a beautiful American, Mrs. Medora Ward, where dancing and flirting were continued.

The luxurious Empress Nicholas, who was already very old and feeble, had in her suite some lovely maids of honour who were not precisely distinguished for their virtue. All was merry and *sans gêne* at this Court, and much licence was permitted. These beautiful ladies told me that at home in St. Petersburg, when the Emperor Nicholas was still alive, they were often obliged to let him warm his hands on their necks (they being *décolletées*) when he was cold on returning from a sleighing party. The Grand Dukes,

who often visited their royal mother in Nice, seemed frequently to suffer from cold hands without the excuse of sleighing parties!

Since then times have changed, and the Russian Court has become as moral as other Courts.

In addition to other fêtes, there was the splendid Court of the Empress, and her magnificent balls which were mostly *des folles journées*, beginning at midday with lunch, followed by dancing and music till 4, when tea and other refreshments were brought in. Dancing was continued until supper-time, and after supper only the mazurka was danced, and this generally ended between 12 and 1 A.M.

The entertainments of the beautiful Grand Duchess Marie, eldest daughter of the Emperor Nicholas, were just as grand, and the widowed Princess Leuchtenberg was, at the time I speak of, remarried to the Russian Grand Seigneur Count Strogonoff. Although he was perhaps thirty years older than I, we struck up a great friendship. He mothered "the child" as he said, in the great wicked world, and I remember many little kindnesses on his part. For instance, I had never learnt how to bear hunger and fatigue, and at one of these *folles journées* at the Grand Duchess's, supper was very long in coming. Feeling famished, I sat in a corner and wept from nervous exhaustion. Suddenly Count Gregor (as the Grand Duchess's husband was called) sat beside me, and asked quite anxiously, "What has happened to the child?"

Half laughing, half weeping, I told him of my hunger, and he exclaimed compassionately, "Well, we must remedy this immediately! Supper will not be ready for half an hour. Come, child, let us see what we can find." We wandered through many empty rooms, and at last found a magnificent buffet, where, to the horror of the lackeys, we destroyed the symmetry of many a choicely piled dish, for the Count helped me with right goodwill. To this day

I am grateful to him for having saved me from "death by starvation," as he jokingly said.

The evenings at the Grand Duchess Helene's were of a more serious kind and less ostentatious. She had a peculiar preference for my father, and was then very busy with her scheme for the abolition of serfdom in Russia. My father was familiar with such schemes, as his own father had worked with the Ministry of Stein-Hardenberg for the freedom of bond service in Germany. The help was, therefore, very welcome to the Grand Duchess.

While the two "statesmen" (for the Grand Duchess was a sort of statesman) worked together in the cabinet, we listened to the pianist Rubinstein, or to other celebrities who were constantly her guests. Sometimes I read aloud Bodenstedt's splendid translations of Lermontov and Puschkin, which were then compared with the Russian originals, and gave rise to many an animated discussion. In the midst of this interesting cosmopolitan circle, where a very wide margin was given to morals and customs, I attained my fifteenth year, spoiled and flattered like a young queen.

CHAPTER X

A FEW weeks later an important event took place, namely, the breaking off of my engagement.

Our old friend Prince Barclay de Tolly fetched us one day for a drive to Villefranche in order to see the men-of-war lying there in harbour. It was a glorious day; the Riviera looked its best, and we revelled in light, warmth, and the perfume of violets. On the heights of Villefranche we met two Russian naval officers, blond, young, slender, and smart in their becoming white summer uniforms. They looked after the carriage, then turned and followed us. As the carriage could only advance slowly on account of the hill, they soon caught us up. They then climbed down the steep declivity in order to receive us on our arrival, and kept a respectful distance until they saw we intended going over to the frigate. Then they approached us, introduced themselves to the Prince, and to my father, as Baron von Krusenstern, Lieutenant and Baron von Kotzebue —midshipmen on the *Palkan*.

Prince Barclay was delighted to recognise in them two countrymen from the Baltic provinces; we also had friends of the same name in Munich, a battle-painter, Baron von Kotzebue, who married Baroness Krusenstern. After looking over the fine ship, the whole party was invited back to dine with us, a carriage was soon procured, and we drove home in the gayest mood.

I have never met such wild, merry young men

as these two cousins—Paul von Krusenstern, twenty, Ernst von Kotzebue, nineteen years of age. They had the refined manners of the "Kuric" nobility, and, where necessary, the discipline of their strict naval service.

The most congenial was Paul; the wittiest was Ernst. In spite of his youth, Paul von Krusenstern had already had an interesting life. The Emperor had bestowed vast lands, in regions of eternal ice in Petropavlovsk, upon Admiral von Krusenstern the explorer, who was an ancestor of Paul's. At the age of twelve he had made the dangerous voyage there with his father, who was also an admiral, and had all sorts of strange adventures with the men and animals living there. He told us about it in the most amusing way, so that one hardly knew what was drawn from his vivid imagination or what from reality. I, who resembled him in vivacity and impressionability, listened with delight to his stories, and was fascinated by them.

Within a few hours, both officers were head over ears in love with me; but I favoured Paul.

Soon they and their companions were introduced to Nice society, and springtime with all its social gaieties approached. Detained by the fleet, which stayed in harbour, the Russian Count, with Grand Duke Constantine Nicolairitah—Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean squadron—remained in Nice until the summer.

The Grand Duchesses took sea-baths, as we all did, and amusements began early in the morning with cavalcades and picnics, and ended at night with dancing and champagne.

Speaking later of this mad time, I described it thus: "It was society composed of the froth of all grades, and no one cared what became of the froth when the bubbles burst."

In our house, where there was a silent longing for more serious things, we tried to read Victor

Hugo's dramas, dividing the parts amongst us, also a few other French authors, but here again these readings were only a cloak for flirtation.

The whole of society seemed to have been seized with an erotic mania. I can remember no lady in those days, whether married or single, who had not her liaison; and behaviour which at other times would have been severely judged, was now winked at.

Let me quote one little characteristic episode.

There was an old Italian Marquise, who in her youth had been the official mistress of King Carlo Alberto of Piedmont. Her erect carriage and regular but sharp features still bore evidence of her once great beauty. She was known as one of the most amusing society women, owing to the frankness with which she discussed every topic, even the most *risqué*, but only, of course, when her grandchild was out of earshot. For many years she had superintended the education of this young lady. The Comtesse was an insignificant sort of girl, possessing neither mental nor bodily attractions. Her grandmother looked after her most strictly.

She had no dowry, and in consequence of this had remained unmarried in the adventurous society of Nice. She was now twenty-five years of age.

One day the grandmother, hitherto so rigidly moral, called the Comtesse into her boudoir for a serious talk. After looking at her for a time half in pity, half in wonder, she said:

"Look here! If you don't marry, would you not like to *behave* as if you were married?"

The girl looked at the old Marquise in complete bewilderment. "What *do* you mean, grandmamma?" she said at length.

"Dear child! I mean that it is time for you to take a lover!"

"But, grandmamma, how can you make such horrible jokes?"

"I am not joking at all! I can assure you that when *virtue* (this was even more forcibly expressed) becomes old, it pleases neither God nor the devil. There is, for instance, that charming Count —— courting you! He has no money; neither have you. Marriage is out of the question, but he is just the right person for a little love affair. If I were young, I know what I should do!"

The foolish virgin did not quite understand, and did *not* act according to the above advice! The grandmother told us, half in jest, half in anger, of the stupidity of her granddaughter. She added, "I cannot do more to further her happiness than *tenir la chandelle au bonheur*! But to show her how to do it—that is too much! She is *too* stupid."

I could give marvellous details of it all, but they would sound like a novel of the eighteenth century—I therefore remain silent. But one explanation I must offer as an excuse for it. It was a cosmopolitan society brought together for a short time. No one had any feeling of moral responsibility towards anybody. Each knew that he was never likely to meet the other again, and this probably loosened all bonds of morals and manners.

This disregard of all conventional rules was hardly beneficial to any of them; it was most pernicious poison for all the young people, and deadly poison for me, its youngest member. I have striven for half my life to recover the rectitude I lost in those days with their mixed conceptions of right and wrong in social intercourse. I never regained any respect for the world's code of honour, as I realised too well its false values, and with my straightforwardness despised the insincerity underlying it all.

Thus it was that the whole world knew almost as soon as I did my love for Paul von Krusenstern. I made absolutely no secret of it. So intense was the outbreak of my passion that Baron von Kotzebue used to say in later years, "I have witnessed three

elemental forces in my life. I have been in a typhoon; I have seen one of the greatest volcanic eruptions of this century; and I was a spectator of Helene von Dönniges' first love."

To return to my narrative. No day passed that did not see us together from morning till night, with the exception of Paul's few hours' duty on board. My parents, too occupied with their own affairs, had no eyes for the awakening passion of their daughter, and my beloved grandmother was obliged to leave us at the end of the winter, as one of her sons needed her. One important thing she had helped me to achieve, the breaking of my engagement with the detested Italian.

My dawning passion gave me a courage toward my parents which I should not otherwise have possessed. The Colonel had come back once more! During his fortnight's stay, the frigate *Palkan* had received orders to go to Naples. My Russian friends were therefore away, but the ever-present image of my beloved gave me courage to show my aversion plainly to the Italian. I treated him as if he did not exist. A trifle brought about the climax. On a previous occasion he had presented me with a very costly little watch, which Paul von Krusenstern had dropped and broken whilst he was winding it. The Colonel, already excited by my behaviour, asked me loudly, "Who did it?"

I answered mockingly, "The charming Russian officer."

This was not the first occasion on which I had given him this answer. This time he shouted angrily at me, "Who *is* this Russian officer, that I may break his neck. You seem to have bestowed various favours on him."

"Yes! that I have," I answered firmly, drawing off my engagement ring and throwing it at the feet of the enraged man. Then I opened the door, and departed with the words, "There! Now it is all over between us, and I will never see you again."

In the next room I met grandmamma, and at once told her everything. She kissed me and said, "Heaven be praised that you have at last got so far. Now let me arrange the rest."

She then discussed the affair with my parents and the Colonel, and I heard nothing more about it. He departed without my seeing him again.

CHAPTER XI

I NOW abandoned myself with every fibre of my heart to love. It was so intense that no one dared to interfere between us; even several of my admirers retired silently when they saw how much I preferred Paul. The frigate had returned some time ago to Nice. Amidst the orange blossoms and flowers, and on the blue sea waves, in ball-rooms, and on horseback, we were oblivious of all else, and were like young gods in the early days of mankind.

Society was amused, and people laughed at us, for we took no pains whatever to hide our feelings. Things went on like this for some time. We were content with what life offered us in its many opportunities of meeting and embracing. But with the long days of summer the longing to possess overcame us in our youthfulness.

Two summer evenings rise before my mind's eye—splendid, hot, and full of perfume. At a picnic we two rode away from the rest of the party, and let our horses wander where they would. Intoxicated with our love, we arranged a rendezvous in the garden by moonlight in an arbour of roses, for that night.

When the time came, I flew, rather than ran, to the spot, where, hidden in the entwining roses, my young lover awaited me.

But strange! when I was quite near, my courage failed me; shame crept over me at what I was doing, and my feet, which had borne me so lightly to the spot, now seemed unable to carry me across the

threshold of the arbour. Paul—my wild Paul—reclined within. Whilst waiting for me he had strewn the arbour with quantities of roses, and now began showering them on me. I stood on the threshold in a rain of flowers. Then he rose up. I remained at the entrance and whispered:

"What am I to do?"

Then he laughed, and throwing the last of the roses at me he called out, "Go! go! my sweetest one, and if ever any one else begs you to come to a rendezvous, then I shall say to him—— Go!"

I heard no more. I turned round, and rushed, flew, exulting into the house, not knowing why I was so glad, nor yet why immediately afterwards I was weeping bitterly.

Another summer night ended differently. We had neither of us discussed or arranged anything. I had crept alone into the bower of roses. Beneath the heavily scented sprays I lay, and dreamed, and thought, and wished, and longed. There he stood, then knelt beside me, and his voice, which always intoxicated me, whispered, "I knew you would be here!"

We hardly said anything else. Love, youth, the glorious summer night, these did as they have done since time began, and youthful love existed. Oh! blessed be that night of flowers.

Sei sie gesegnet jene Blütennacht!

A short time of mad intoxication followed, then the Russian fleet left the Mediterranean.

Weariness and desolation entered my paradise, and my young, longing heart.

Paul's father arrived soon afterwards to ask for my hand in marriage for his son. How my pulses beat when I knew the great question was being discussed! I was not even asked what my wishes were. The Admiral's communication as to the fortune and prospects of his son did not satisfy my parents, and

under the pretext of not wishing their child to settle in such desolate ice regions (where the Krusensterns' possessions lay) they refused. Thus ended our youthful dream.

Many years later, when I was free and stood alone in life, Baron Ernst von Kotzebue asked me again, on Paul's behalf, to become his wife. Herr von Kotzebue was attached to the Russian Embassy in Berlin, and I was living there studying for the stage. From conversation with him and the friends of my youth, I gathered that Paul's high spirits had led him into many foolish scrapes. He was also a great gambler, and on the brink of ruin. To his family I seemed to be his only hope of salvation. The old *first* love could perhaps conquer and save him. But, apart from the fact that the passion for gambling always filled me with the greatest horror, my interests then were all centred in the stage. Marriage with the lover of my first youth attracted me no more. I therefore declined the Baron's offer with thanks. I never saw Paul again. A few years later he lost his life in a bold expedition to the North Pole. The ship was wrecked that he himself commanded. He was for three weeks stranded on an iceberg with one member of his crew. They had saved provisions and instruments, but although he reached Petersburg alive, he died of the consequences of this terrible journey.

At that time much was talked and written about the young hero and his privations on the iceberg, which had exhausted even his great power of resistance.

I cherish an affectionate remembrance of him to this day, and have often defended him against attacks of friends who called him a base seducer. No! a thousand times no! That he never was! There was never any question of "seduction" in our case. It was the attraction of two young creatures towards each other, perhaps without even the real great love. This came in my case later; the longing for love, for

all that is loving and beautiful. It was the working of the wonderful south with its seduction, its whirlwind, and last, not least, the example of society. We were both equally guilty, if there can be any question of guilt—but both were equally happy.

Never have I for one moment repented of my naive abandonment amid the scent of blossoms and the song of nightingales, in the gentle murmur of the moonlit silver sea, in the clear, sweet summer night. Anything more burning, more beautiful, the old moon or this old world has surely never seen.

Therefore, I say again, "Blessed be that summer night!"

CHAPTER XII

Until my eighteenth year I lived in Nice, but these years can offer no special interest to the general reader. Perhaps one ball may be considered an exception, at which I was allowed to dance in the same quadrille as the Empress Eugénie, who was then at the zenith of her glory.

The Franco-Italian war against Austria was now at an end, and the French troops returned home amidst the rejoicings of the population of Nice. The royal pair, Napoleon III. and the beautiful Empress, had come to the boundary of their kingdom to greet the victorious troops.

The ball was given to the royal pair by the town.

My father, as the only ambassador present, was much honoured. Mamma was once again confined to her bed, so I took her place at the ball. I was so lost in admiration of this wonderful Empress Eugénie, that in dancing in the royal quadrille with the Russian Consul, I forgot to make the usual steps. Everything was symmetrically perfect in her ; the slender, graceful figure, with the beautifully modelled shoulders, which were enhanced by the white dress she wore, profusely embroidered with pearls and silver. Her exquisite shape attracted me perhaps even more than did the classically beautiful head, with the noble regular features and the auburn hair, upon which sparkled a royal diadem. Her charming smile bewitched me as much as did the few friendly words she addressed to me in her melodious voice.

Napoleon, who danced in another quadrille, inspired me with a slight feeling of awe, though he interested me with his blasé expression and sharply cut profile. I replied shyly and softly to his gracious words, and all my life I raved about the beautiful Empress.

Seven years later, when I was in Paris, I could not understand that the love of the people and of the Court seemed bestowed more upon the Emperor than on the beautiful Empress. They called her haughty and bigoted, cold-hearted and narrow-minded. This was the opinion of her entourage; they admired her appearance, her love of show, her taste (although it was she who introduced the crinoline to hide her interesting condition), but she seemed to inspire very few people with love. The Emperor, however, was loved both as man and as ruler. I was told that Napoleon was very much more hearty in his dealings with the Royal Prince than the Empress was, for she preferred discussing new modes with her dressmakers to occupying herself with her little son's education. I did not take much notice of these opinions, because although for a time there was a project for me to remain at this Court, nothing came of it; but of all this I shall speak later.

The years thus passed in the great world of Nice did not help to improve my character. The behaviour of my parents, who accepted or refused one suitor after another (as years went on many such presented themselves for me), taught me that fidelity was not among the virtues demanded of me. I therefore acted as all those around me did, and flirted with one after another.

If, as was inevitable in this great cosmopolitan caravanserai, parting soon followed—well, one consoled oneself more or less quickly; no one cared or asked anything about one's feelings in the matter; one laughed, and pitied nothing and no one!

Instead of fidelity, two other feelings were

awakened in me, and they became deep signs of character which accompanied me all through life: the conviction of the equal rights of man and woman in love affairs (especially with childless women, such as I was, and remained); the knowledge of the evanescence of love, and the absolute love of truth. Every man who approached me tried to prove to me that such an exceptional being as I was not born for fidelity. Of course they applied the same arguments to other women, as I knew, with the result that I became almost fanatical in my love of frankness. "Never will I lie to, or cheat any one about myself," became in me a sort of clarion cry, the motto of my life's action. I lived up to it, if I often suffered deeply, even risking the happiness of my life for it.

Only a short span of careless youth was granted me by Fate, which stepped towards me with ruthless tread, showing no mercy for my acquired and natural weaknesses, and punishing me cruelly through myself.

The mad joys of youth ended for ever.

PART IV

In Berlin once more—Yanko my spiritual possession—With the master W. von Kaulbach—President Bonseri, Baron Korff, and other friends of Lassalle's—Lassalle enters my life—Mutual impressions—Yanko as confidant—At the jurists' ball, and later—Long separation—Grandmother's death—Geneva—Meeting on the Rigi—Engagement—At home—At the hotel with Lassalle—At a friend's—Terrible scenes—Dreadful times before the duel—Lassalle's death—What happened afterwards—Why I nevertheless married Yanko—Wallachia—Marriage—Sad short union—Yanko's death and burial.

For all who are interested in this story, this portion of my reminiscences is the most important.

Many years ago in my little book, *My Connection with Lassalle* (Schottländer, 1879), I published many details which I must now repeat, in order to reproduce my conversation with Lassalle and his most extraordinary views. His words have sunk into my heart and mind in his own fascinating voice and manner of delivery, and I seem only able to reproduce them in full.

Beside Lassalle's words, and the events as I saw them, and as I now endeavour faithfully to reproduce them, there is my present version of all which led to the fearful catastrophe involving the death of one of the most wonderful men of all time. This ranks as far above my first effort as the speech of ripe manhood does above the halting expression of a child.

The story I wrote then of the events in our household was written chiefly in order to let the world know what humiliations and cruelties I suffered, and what pressure was put upon me to make me act as I did; to show the world my real self, and to tell the truth which only I could know.

To-day matters are different. All broad-minded people who have looked with unbiased views on the tragedy of those days, have judged the unhappy heroine more justly. Other work than mine, namely, the publication of Lassalle's letters in the work written by a high German official, *The Sorrows of Lassalle*; George Brandes's *Lassalle's Biography*, and other books, have done much to dispel the false impressions arising from garbled misstatements.

I myself, standing now on the brink of old age, look at everything more calmly and clearly, and am capable of judging more impartially by virtue of the knowledge I have since acquired, in the shape of intimate letters, etc. I am thus able to give a more complete picture of the great man than was possible at that time. This new version is almost a necessity of to-day.

Whenever I have found it needful in order to preserve the sequence of events to quote certain details already published in my previous work, I have notified this fact in a footnote.

CHAPTER XIII

I AM unable to remember the exact reasons which led me to my sojourn in Berlin with grandmamma in 1862. She felt lonely, and I felt grateful to be her chosen comforter. My mother and I never understood each other, but my whole heart went out to my grandmother. It was possible that during her long stay with us in Munich she thought it advisable to remove me from the frivolous life which she considered would be baneful to my character, and wished to do this before it was too late.

On our arrival in Berlin she insisted on a regular course of study. I attended Professor Werner's lectures on Goethe and Shakespeare at the University, and was taken to certain operas and plays, and was also made to study classical music. In short, the girl who had been allowed to run wild on the shores of the blue Mediterranean was now taken well in hand, and new interests soon made the memory of those wild days appear like a mad carnival dream.

It was autumn when we returned to the north, and I, who had always been accustomed to the southern atmosphere, suffered from the climate. The coolness of social intercourse, too, made me feel as if I had been transported to another planet: "I am forced to breathe Polar atmosphere; you are all icebergs in Berlin," I often exclaimed; and "Oh for a Southerner with hot blood in his veins!"

And he came! One day when the University holidays were over, he stood before me. My dark

fairy-prince, my Moorish page as I often called him, Yanko von Racowitza, who became from that moment — until his early death — my faithful and beloved friend.

For it was loving friendship with which he inspired me, not love itself. He was too boyish, and mentally too undeveloped, for the latter; but his great love for me, and thorough understanding of my peculiar temperament, his charming personality and amiability, combined with his musical talent and enthusiasm for everything noble and beautiful, all contributed to make the tie between us one of the closest.

He played a leading part in our circle of friends, who loved him for his amiability, good looks, and modesty. He was always ready to please, too, with his delightful musical talent.

Our conversation was generally in French, and we read together most of the new French authors of the time. No restriction had been placed by my grandmother, or by my parents, on the books I read. In fact, during the phase of our development we shared every impression, artistic and otherwise, and became the closest companions.

At this time Wilhelm von Kaulbach, the celebrated painter, was finishing his frescoes in the Berlin Museum. His artistic eye delighted in the contrast between my red-gold beauty and that of my dusky Moor.

One morning in the Museum he wished me to mount his scaffolding and sit for the colour of my red-gold hair, which he required for one of his figures, and I told Yanko to come and amuse me during the sitting. This turned out to be needless, as Kaulbach himself was in the most imaginative mood.

As he stood there painting he told us fairy tales of ancient Greece. On the wings of his fantastic imagination he carried himself and me back to former incarnations when, he said, I was the friend of Pericles, and he conversed with the gods.

The charm of that hour is still in my memory, and when Yanko and I stepped into the daylight of the Lustgarten, we felt as if we had emerged from a fairy castle, the portals of which had been opened to us by the hand of genius.

At that time Emil Paleske, the writer of Schiller's life, and the greatest dramatic reciter of his time, came to Berlin. I listened in breathless delight to his magnificent rendering of the dramas of all our greatest poets, which he recited by heart.

He soon became a great friend of grandmamma and myself, and we passed delightful evenings reading many well-known works. We read *Faust*, *Egmont*, and *Iphigenie*; and one of my greatest regrets is that I was not allowed at that time to follow the bent of my own inspiration, and become an actress. I might have developed into a great artist, and the whole of my life been more harmonious. As it was my best powers were maimed by the tragedies of my life, and it was only with broken wings that in after-years I took the longed-for flight. Later! Too late!

As time went on the studies which Yanko and I pursued together, and our mutual enthusiasm for art, made us even closer friends than before; more and more I recognised his nobility of soul.

At last one day he knelt before me, and with broken voice implored me to marry him when his studies were completed. I replied, "If in the meantime I can find no one whom I can love far, far better than you, and if I do not go on the stage, which I would do now were it not for silly family reasons—then I will marry you." This was surely no engagement, not even a promise of any kind; but he felt himself consecrated to me from that moment, and gave me his entire life and love.

In those days I was not worthy of this love; I accepted it like that of so many others, with a light heart and as a matter of course, just as a blossoming tree in springtime accepts floods of sunshine.

Love, with all the intoxication of the senses, was as necessary to me and my nature as the sun is to the flower; but in those days I had not learnt to treasure it as a gift of God, nor did I appreciate Oscar Wilde's words when he said: "Love is a sacrament which we should receive kneeling, and upon the lips and hearts of those who partake of it should be written *Domine non sum dignus.*" I was still very far from feeling this.

Then came the winter—Ferdinand Lassalle entered my life, and all else faded into shadow.

At that time one of the most delightful and hospitable houses in Berlin was that of old President Bonseri and his amiable, white-haired, dainty wife, whom I nicknamed "Old Butterfly." This was almost the only house where one met indiscriminately artists, men of letters, officers, and the high official world. The "Old Butterfly" had taken me to her heart, and grandmamma permitted me to go there unchaperoned.

It was on the evening of a ball. I had danced a great deal, felt a little bored, and looked round in the noisy crowd for some one with whom I could have an interesting little talk.

I saw Augusta Formes, a well-known Shakespearian actress, conversing with an officer of dragoons. As I went towards her she exclaimed joyfully, "Ah! Now I can introduce my clever friend Baron Korff to you. He did not take his eyes off you while you were dancing, you golden nixie child! Fräulein von Dönniges is a remarkable phenomenon, not a mere society damsel."

I happened to know he was not of the ordinary officer type, as I had heard about him already from his sister-in-law, Cornelia Meyerbeer, in Nice. She had told me all about his wild days in Berlin and how, when stationed here, he had spent his money recklessly, had been the hero of many adventures, yet at the same time a favourite friend of

Alexander von Humboldt and of other eminent people.

I was in my element in the animated conversation that followed, and had made them laugh at one of my unconventional speeches, when Frau Formes was called away and Korff said suddenly, "Ah! You know Lassalle!"

I had never even heard his name, so replied indifferently, "No! Who is it?"

To this question Korff made no reply, and we continued conversing about all sorts of things. Suddenly he exclaimed, "You must know him, for only a woman who knows Lassalle could talk as you do."

I answered almost irritably, "No! Who *is* this man?"

The Baron became suddenly serious and said, "Oh! let all the smaller souls around us deny him; but let us two confess to each other that we both know and admire him."

My curiosity was now thoroughly aroused. "I give you my word of honour I do not know him—have never even heard his name. Who is it?"

Korff replied, "Well then, I can only regret every hour that passes without your knowing each other; you are the only woman I can imagine as a fitting mate for him."

Is it to be wondered at that my curiosity was now aroused to the extreme, and that I exclaimed, "Good heavens! Who is the man?"

"A great revolutionist, and the most interesting man I know, whose extraordinary mind makes him dangerous alike to men and women."

"Ah, to women also!"

He smiled: "Are you jealous already?"

"No! But tell me more," I said.

"Very well, but not here. Let us ask Frau Formes to take us now to her flat (she lived on the same floor). She knows him well, and we can tell you all about him there."

I gladly consented and we left the ball-room for an hour. Ensconced in a cosy corner of Frau Formes's boudoir, I listened intently to all they both told me of him.

The social side of Lassalle's life, and his relations with women, seemed to interest them more than the political; therefore I heard much of the former and nothing of the latter.

First and foremost they mentioned Countess Hatzfeld as a terrible person who smoked huge cigars, wore thick false eyebrows and a red wig, and who—from being his former mistress—had now become an absolute tyrant.

They then spoke of a more recent love-affair; the name of Sophie was mentioned, and many others. I was interested, but not more so than I should have been in the adventures of any other unknown person. So at last I stood up saying, "It is getting late, let us return to the ball-room."

No more was said on the subject and this little episode made no deep impression on me, as my head was full of a thousand other things; but fate was working.

A few weeks later I was taken to dinner, at a large party, by Dr. Carl Oldenburg, one of the wittiest men in Berlin. From light and amusing topics we fell upon deeper subjects, when he suddenly exclaimed, "You might be a pupil of 'Heraclitus the Dark,' or, in vulgar parlance, of Ferdinand Lassalle,—or better still, you might be his wife, the only woman I can imagine as such."

Here again—almost the same words as Baron Korff had spoken.

"Do you also know him?" I remarked half shyly.

"Know him? Say, rather, love and admire him. I am proud of being his best friend."

He then told me all about his friend's great work, *Heraclitus the Dark*, and spoke of him as one of Germany's most learned men, dangerous alike to men

and women, and then he whispered mysteriously, "Even our iron Bismarck is said to be under his ban."

"But I thought he was a revolutionist," I said, astonished.

At this moment the dinner ended, and with it our conversation.

My thoughts often reverted to that evening. Next day I asked grandmamma about Lassalle. I had come to the right person!

"He is a terrible man," she said. "He wants all the rich to divide their goods with the poor."

"Well," I replied, "so did Jesus Christ!"

"He was also mixed up in a horrible case of theft; I do not know the exact facts of the case, but anyhow he is an awful creature whom no one in good society receives."

I was silent, but in no way convinced. Next, I questioned Yanko, who evidently knew little more. He merely gave me a few more details regarding the "Cassette" story, then added, "But how can a man interest you whom you are sure never to meet in our circle?"

CHAPTER XIV

Amongst our acquaintances was a charming couple called Hirsemenzel. The husband was a lawyer, and my uncle's friend, and they gave the most original parties every Tuesday evening, from which nonentities were rigidly excluded. Madame H. knew of my growing interest in Lassalle, and as I entered her drawing-room one Tuesday evening she whispered to me, "Lassalle is here in my husband's library, so your desire to know him will be fulfilled at last."

"I should like to *hear* him first. Do not introduce him to me at once," was my whispered reply.

I was then placed on a little stool at the back of a tall sofa through the carved framework of which I could see the folding doors leading into the library. They opened, and two gentlemen stepped with the host into the lighted drawing-room.

I do not know why, but having heard continually of Lassalle's mind and erudition, I had imagined him to be a little man with strongly marked Jewish features. As a matter of fact I had not thought much about his personal appearance, and one of the men was exactly as I have just described. With him entered a tall figure with a Cæsar-like head and expression.

It never entered my head that this could be Lassalle—the little Jew must be he! Clever men are ugly; but the tall, imposing one began to speak, and I forgot all else.

I could only listen and listen, and at last, in a flash, I realised that it *must* be he and no other.

Everyone in the room listened spellbound to his conversation, which was stormy and powerful, sweeping over everything I had hitherto considered as unalterable and sacred.

He came into my life like the storm-wind that rushes over forests and plains, and destroys all that is crumbling and effete. I listened entranced, enthusiastic, but nevertheless not agreeing with everything he was saying. Suddenly I sprang up, and forgetting that this man had never seen me, I interrupted him by exclaiming, "No! I do not agree with you there."

For one moment he stopped; the eagle glance of his commanding blue eyes was directed upon me, then a smile crept over his classic features, and stepping up to me he said softly, "Ho, ho! so *this* is what she looks like! I thought so! That's all right. And" —laughing heartily—"'*No*' is the first word I hear spoken by this mortal?"

It was all over. In that very first moment he could have said that which he did a little later: "We both knew that we had met our destiny in each other."

The people around us were forgotten. We became oblivious of the little salon and all conventions. We discussed anything and everything between heaven and earth. We spoke of ourselves, and he mentioned our future, as if we belonged to each other as a matter of course, and as if our union were known and sanctioned by all.

Of course we remained together the whole evening. According to the original and conventional traditions of the household the guests were asked to decide what they would prefer to eat, and this was procured from a restaurant near by. The host's ample and famous wine-cellar was at the disposal of the guests, and bottle after bottle of the costliest wine was

placed before them. The evening passed like a dream.

When at last my relations got up to leave, Lassalle came out into the hall with me, wrapped me up carefully in my cloak, and, impatient at the long farewells in the drawing-room, opened the door of the flat, lifted me high in his arms, and carried me downstairs.

No protest was made by me at such an absolutely incredible proceeding! It all seemed to me so natural—so much a matter of course. My happiness made me oblivious of the world, and everything he uttered seemed to flow from my own soul!

It was only when we had arrived at my door, and when he said to me, "To-morrow I am coming to grandmamma to get her consent," that I suddenly awoke to the dreadful reality that this man to whom I had given in one instant my whole heart for all eternity, would never be accepted by any member of my family. Tremblingly I implored him not to do this, but to wait patiently, as the time had not yet come to take such a step.

Seeing my anxiety he sighed and acquiesced, but said half-warningly, "May we never regret the time we are losing."

We parted, and it was many, many months before we met again.

Now, when I look back at the way I then acted, I can hardly realise that I was the undecided being who allowed family considerations to play havoc with my happiness and that of the man I adored.

It is easy enough, when one knows the end, to look back and say one should have acted otherwise, but I was so young then, life seemed so long, and confidence in the future a natural thing.

I now began to take the greatest interest in all Lassalle's work and speeches.

I said to Yanko next day, "I have met Lassalle, and if he really wishes it I mean to marry him; he is the ideal of the man I have always sought."

"In heaven's name," he exclaimed horrified, "a man whom you have only seen for a few hours, and at a time when he and his friends were excited by wine and eloquence, a man of whom we have heard only the most unfavourable reports?"

I flared up. "Say nothing against him. I don't ask your opinion, but only tell you facts. Now be good. Prove you love me, and get me everything Lassalle has ever written."

He did so. The reading of these pamphlets was not an easy matter to accomplish, and we had recourse to the ruse of slipping them inside the classical works. Yanko and I studied together every evening.

In the next room grandmamma, my old uncle, and my young aunt usually sat playing *l'hombre*. My dear little Aunt Sophie, who was much nearer my age than that of her husband, was in our secret, and when grandmamma overheard a word now and then, and asked what we were reading, Aunt Sophie replied, "Oh, they are trying a Greek philosopher that Racowitza has brought with him." Thus, no one troubled about us, and we became more and more entranced with Lassalle's burning eloquence.

We also tried to read *Heraclitus the Dark*, but it seemed too difficult to understand, so we laid it aside, although Yanko—who was studying law at the Berlin University—promised to help me over the technical difficulties.

I have often been reproached with having a certain strain of cruelty in my nature, and there may be some truth in this. I always demanded and obtained from my admirers unequivocal recognition of the superior qualities of their favoured rivals. In Yanko's case, when he at first refused to study Lassalle's works with me, I said, "You must. You owe it to yourself. You ought to know how great is the intellect of the man I prefer to you, for when you recognise the superiority of his mind your pride will no longer suffer."

He gave in, though with an anxious heart, but as from the first his literary tastes had been fashioned on the pattern of mine, I knew he could not resist the force of Lassalle's glowing spirit. We read the "Cassette" case with the greatest interest, and this gave me a deeper insight into Lassalle's character. Yanko was carried away by Ferdinand's youthful enthusiasm, and by his famous speech of defence, in which Countess Hatzfeld is described as one of the noblest of women, brutally maligned by an unfaithful husband.

We had both heard, as no doubt have many of my readers, very superficial details of the once famous "Cassette" theft case, which took place in 1848. It had been mentioned in my family as a very nasty affair. The real facts were as follows: Count Hatzfeld had deserted his young and beautiful wife for the sake of his mistress Frau von Megendorf, and had thrown her on the world with hardly any means of subsistence. At that time Lassalle, who was then a youth of twenty, met and, it was said, loved her. He devoted all his youth and brilliant capacities in the defence of her cause, renouncing, for her sake, all the splendid possibilities the future held for one who completed his studies with such distinction. I had not the slightest doubt that she fully responded to his love. How could it be otherwise, when to-day, though nearly forty, he was still so handsome and imposing, so like a Roman Cæsar. What power he must have held in the full flush of his youthful beauty.

Lassalle had denied before the judges at Düsseldorf all intimate intercourse with the Countess. To us this was but another proof of chivalry. Full of emotion we read the following words in his speech for the defence: "Not a word from the entire family. An old proverb says that when human beings remain dumb, stones will cry out. When every right of humanity is outraged, when even the voice of blood

is silent, and a helpless human being is deserted by its born protectors, let the voice of universal brotherhood be raised and man usurp his right to shield his weaker fellow-man."

How often I remembered these words in later years, when I was deserted by all, and longed in vain for a helping hand.

I learnt during the perusal of the case that the reproach against Lassalle of accepting pecuniary aid from Countess Hatzfeld was unjust. Until he brought her divorce case to a satisfactory end he shared with her the modest income allowed him by his father; and during ten years of his life devoted his entire time and talents to her cause. Then, and then only, he allowed her to settle a certain yearly income on him, as surely she would have done by any eminent lawyer who had sacrificed years of work and study in her service. I may mention here that Ferdinand himself told me later on in the Berne period, when speaking of his pecuniary position, that his income was about £1000 a year (seven thousand talers), the chief portion of which was derived from the shares his father had left him in the Breslau gasworks.

To return to the "Cassette" story. Lassalle left no stone unturned in order to prove Count Hatzfeld's brutality to his wife, and his utterly reckless expenditure on gifts to Frau von Megendorf. These immense sums threatened to ruin the family. Lassalle's great object was to obtain the Count's correspondence and these deeds of gift.

In this he was successful. Two of his friends, Oppenheim and Mendelssohn, managed, when on a journey, to steal, either from Frau von Megendorf, or from her servants, the casket which contained, as it was supposed, all these important papers. Lassalle was accused of being the instigator of this theft, but proved (when only twenty years of age), in a speech of defence lasting four hours, that this was impossible.

He was acquitted, and by his eloquence in this, his first public speech, became the greatest German orator.

Now came the time when Lassalle was the central figure of my existence, and by some fatality I heard of him continually without ever meeting him again. At Lassalle's instigation various plans were made by my kind friend Frau Formes to bring us together under her hospitable roof, but none of them were successful.

My grandmamma's house stood then on the present site of the Houses of Parliament. In one of the flats lived the famous historian Boeckh with his family, in the very dwelling once occupied by the brothers Grimm (authors of the well-known fairy tales). We often visited the Boeckhs, and one afternoon at coffee the conversation turned on Lassalle.

Old Boeckh said in response to some remark, "Lassalle is the most eminent and witty man I know."

I could have hugged him; then a noted society beauty added, "Lassalle is the *handsomest* man I have ever seen." Old Boeckh smiled, and told a story of how Lassalle had helped Heinrich Heine in Paris in 1846, when the latter was involved in complicated affairs; Heine spoke of himself as an antelope who had placed himself under the protection of a young lion, and when Lassalle returned to Berlin gave him several rapturous letters of recommendation to various eminent people. "But," said one of those present, "this Lassalle, friend of the working class, leads a most immoral and luxurious life in the Bellevue Strasse with his old Countess. He lives in a princely way."

The speaker, however, had come to the wrong person, for the historian replied angrily, "Oh well, if you want to judge exceptional people by the ordinary moral standards, then you cannot understand them. Lassalle's character is a curious mixture of

the ancient and modern—perhaps only comparable in history with that of Alcibiades; hypersensitive, yet brave; a warrior, yet with a keen appreciation of the art of luxurious living. During my long life I have not known his equal."

This was a proud moment for me, to hear such praise of the man to whom I felt I belonged entirely, and by such a competent judge. Boeckh also spoke of his eminence in philology, philosophy, and statesmanship, and added, "His speeches for defence testify to his extraordinary capacity as an advocate."

I will now quote Heinrich Heine's famous letter to Lassalle, written on January 3, 1846, when the latter was only twenty years of age, as it may interest many of my readers to hear the great opinion the brilliant poet had of this young man.

My friend Mr. Lassalle, who will present this letter to you, is a most highly gifted young man, and one who unites the widest knowledge with the greatest astuteness. I have been astounded at his energy of will power, of conception, and promptness of action. This combination of knowledge and strength, talent and character, in one so young has been a great surprise as well as a delight to me. Lassalle is a true child of modern times; one who wishes to know nothing of the renunciation and humility which have been the keynotes of our lives.

This new race wishes to enjoy, to assert itself in a visible manner; whereas we old ones bent the knee before the invisible world, reached forth for shadowy kisses, and the scent of azure blossoms. We were consumed by fires of exultation, and were maybe happier in our idealism than these stern gladiators who go forth so proudly to their deadly combats.

Shortly after this I heard still more interesting details of him from another source.

I knew a lady who was the wife of one of Bismarck's confidential secretaries. The lady herself was not clever, but as her husband was very much in love with her, he had no secrets from her. He had spoken to her of my acquaintance with Lassalle, and of old Boeckh's praises of him. She was a child of

the people, and had never been able to acquire the manners of society, or learn the diplomacy of silence. Hence the following speech: "My goodness! That's just Bismarck's opinion of Lassalle! My husband says that Bismarck is simply delighted with him, and that no one's conversation has interested him so much for a long time."

"Really," I exclaimed. "Then what I heard whispered is true, that Lassalle is a great deal with Bismarck."

"Yes, certainly, but——"

The conversation was at this moment interrupted by the entrance of her husband who, on hearing the subject of our conversation, said to his wife: "Hush, hush! Do not speak of things you do not understand. Women should not mix in politics."

But I had heard enough to delight me. In later years my thoughts reverted to that afternoon and her naive revelations, when I read Bismarck's celebrated parliamentary speech, which was as follows:—

> In private life Lassalle possessed an extraordinary attraction for me, and was one of the most witty and amiable men I have ever met. A man who was ambitious in the greatest sense of the word. He was by no means a republican, his turn of mind was distinctly national and monarchical, and his ideas gravitated towards German Imperial Government. Here, of course, we met on common ground. I think he was somewhat doubtful as to whether this Imperial Government would be better entrusted in the hands of the Hohenzollern or the Lassalle Dynasty, but in any case his opinions were monarchical through and through. He would have been the first to repudiate all connection with the various agitating parties who now profess to be his followers; and would have torn his name from their standards and hurled them indignantly from him. He was a most energetic and clever man, and I found our conversations, which sometimes lasted for hours, most instructive. I was always sorry when they ended.

He and I had not met again. In the meantime I had become much attached to a charming couple

named Holthoff, old family friends, who had come to settle in Berlin. Grandmamma's health was beginning to fail, so I was allowed to go to balls, theatres, and concerts under their chaperonage.

One evening we all went to one of Bülow's concerts, and before it began Papa Holthoff, as I called him, left his seat to chat with some friends. The first person I saw him shake hands with was—Lassalle! Then Holthoff came back to us. My heart beat wildly. This was the first time I had seen the man I secretly loved, since that one memorable evening.

"You know Lassalle," I said softly.

"Of course, I have been his friend and lawyer for many years. Do you know him too?"

"No, no!"

The music now interrupted our conversation. In the interval Holthoff went up again to Lassalle. I saw them both talking and looking towards me. Lassalle smiled. When Holthoff returned, he said, "Now, little daughter, out with it. What is there between you and Lassalle?"

"What do you mean?"

"He received me with almost the same words that you uttered just now. 'Do you know Fräulein von Dönniges?' and when I said, 'Yes; do you?' he replied, 'No, no,'—just as you did. What does it all mean?"

"Nothing, we met once, and then no more."

"But wish you had, eh?"

"Yes, very much."

"Very well. That's not difficult. Both of you are like our own children to us."

How happy I felt that evening, for our hasty greeting and hand pressure in the cloak-room had conveyed to us both the unsaid words, "Nothing has changed. We belong to each other."

The next occasion on which we met was at a festival in honour of Uhland, the poet. I was sur-

rounded by my family, and he sat near us with the Holthoffs. We had no opportunity of conversing, but our glances conveyed to each other the sympathy of our thoughts.

Soon after this a dreadful thing happened.

Papa Holthoff, without consulting me, asked my grandmother how my family would receive an offer from Lassalle to marry me! Grandmamma wrote to my father about it. He was then acting as Bavarian Minister in Berne, and answered by a most indignant refusal.

When told of all this by grandmamma, I replied, "How can you have done such a thing without Lassalle's or my permission? I shall take no notice of it whatever."

We never mentioned the subject again.

One of the most brilliant public balls of the season, given by members of the bar, was about to take place. I was going to it with the Holthoffs, and "Papa" had whispered to me that a certain well-known man, who never went to balls, had applied for a ticket, because he wanted to talk to me undisturbed, and this was best managed in such a crowd.

The decisive moment was at hand, and I intended to meet it fully armed. I started, as poor Yanko said later, "adorned like a king's bride."

I was in white silk—white has always been my favourite colour—with white roses and sheaves of silver corn in my red-gold hair.

As I entered the crowded ball-room on Holthoff's arm the dear old man said, "Let us go and seek the hero of the day."

"He is not here yet," I replied.

"How can you possibly know that in this crowd? Even I, who am taller than most people, cannot see if he is here or not."

"No! I know he is not here," I said again, "for I have not the strange sensation I always get when he is near me."

"In heaven's name, little daughter, don't begin to get nerves."

"Now he is coming," I exclaimed, and Holthoff nodded in astonishment, for there in the doorway, speaking to a friend, stood Lassalle, who then came straight towards us.

The feeling I have just mentioned is difficult to define. It was a mixture of bliss and fear; something I have never experienced either before or since. My heart seemed to contract within me, and at the same time my soul flew towards him rejoicing. As a matter of course he simply removed my arm from Holthoff's, placed it within his own, and led me to a corner for a serious talk. "For," said he, "we have important things to discuss, and my time is short. I cannot run the gauntlet here for long."

"Run the gauntlet?" I replied.

"Yes! Every one will wonder what Lassalle, the man of the people, can be doing here! He ought to be at home studying. Not that I care for people's gossip, as, thank heaven, I don't carry the donkey; and, mark you well, child, no one who comes with me will ever be allowed to carry it."

"What on earth do you mean?" I asked, laughing.

"Ah! That story marks an epoch in my life. My father wished me to go into business, but I wanted to study. There were great discussions, in which all my relations and friends joined. Strife entered our household. My mother and sisters sided with me, the others with my father, and, 'What will people say?' was heard on every side. I took up an old book of fables and read a story of a grandfather with his grandchild who were driving a donkey into the town. A man met them and said, 'Why on earth do you let the donkey bear no burden? Let him carry the child.' And so the grandfather did. A second person came along and said, 'Aren't you ashamed, young one, to be riding with your young legs when your grandfather is walking?' The boy

got down and the old man got up. Next they met a woman who called out, 'Poor child! Look at the hard-hearted father riding comfortably, whilst his poor little child has to run after him.' At this the grandfather took the child as well upon his donkey, who trotted on merrily with the two of them. But not for long; for next they met a scholar with stock and spectacles who called out, 'For shame! For shame! to torment a poor animal so. Two of you on his back in such heat!' At this they both got down, and in utter despair lifted the donkey up bodily and carried him into the town. Thus they tried to please every one."

I laughed heartily. He was delighted, but added, "Make no mistake. Neither of us is to carry the donkey. It is chiefly owing to that little story that I take no notice of what people say, and go my own way."

I looked up at him admiringly. Yes! That proud Cæsar-like head with its dominating, deep-blue eyes, was the very incarnation of energy.

I told him this, and he said, "I shall need it all for my 'fox.' Of course you know that Korff calls you 'Golden Fox'? When he first met you he came rushing to me the next morning and called out in the doorway, 'Lassalle, I have found a wife for you, but she is a fox.'"

So we chatted gaily for a time. Then he said seriously, "Time presses, and I must begin my plan of campaign. Tell me, what are your father and mother like? How can I win their good graces? I will make Boeckh give me a letter of introduction to them, and will go and see them."

I felt terrified. He saw it, and said, "You see how necessary my energy is, for in spite of being a woman of the world you are still a little weak child, with no will at all. Never mind! I will manage everything without your help."

I then described my parents and their tastes, and

my home. He said, "This is delightful. They will receive a scholar and poet with open arms."

How often have I since wished that he had carried his project into execution *then*, and seen my parents before other people had poisoned their minds against him. How different everything might have been! I then told Lassalle of that afternoon at old Boeckh's, and how a pretty woman said he was the handsomest man she had ever seen. This pleased him enormously. "I don't care for all Boeckh's praises of my talents, but to be the handsomest man means something. I'll have that inscribed on my tombstone," he said, laughing.

Another incident that happened in the ball-room was that Yanko—my Moorish page—came up to ask me to dance. "Is that Lassalle," he said. I nodded. His dark eyes blazed with jealousy, and I said, "Anyway he looks distinguished," and we danced madly until the music ended, when he took me back to Mamma Holthoff. Lassalle stood beside her and for a second they eyed each other, then Yanko turned and mingled with the crowd. The next time Lassalle and Yanko met it was with levelled weapons.

Lassalle said, "So that is the Moorish prince I am to take you away from?"

I answered, "Oh, that is a matter of no importance."

"With those eyes? Never mind! I will give you up to no one. I would carry you off from the altar itself before you could say 'yes'—for mark you, we are each other's Fate!"

Thus ended our happy evening. We met no more that winter.

My birthday, March 21, arrived. I generally received on that day poems referring to Spring, in a huge basket of flowers. This time there was an anonymous poem amongst them, but a reference to "Fox" and the monogram "F. L." upon the paper, told me where they came from. This dear poem, as

well as the letters of Lassalle, were all taken away from me by the cruelty of my father.

I cannot hold my peace, nor purchase now
By silence, shelter for my body's need.
My spirit moves me, I must testify
To all its pow'r, nor can I quench
Its mighty flood. The more the need increase
Till all withdraw within their own domain
In dire despair, as if the pest had come,
And creep in silence past each other there,
The more my spirit moves me to be up
And throw myself against its devastation
To fight the more, the more it threatens us!
Oh! if a thousand tongues were now but mine,
With every one would I address the land.
Far rather would I, like the hunted prey,
Drag on from place to place, than now despair,
Or lose my faith in truth! No praise for this
I merit now Franciscus! Many live
Who bitterly reproach me for it all.
And yet I think, if but the truth were told,
I merit not their praises nor their blame.
If I possess a soul that deeper feels
Than others do, the sorrows of this world,
And comprehends the universal need,
'Tis not to praise or blame—'twas given me.

Another joyful event took place on this birthday. Mamma Holthoff invited me to go with her next day to meet Lassalle's sister, Frau von Friedland, and she added, "No doubt we shall find the brother in 'Papa's' library."

What a happy afternoon it was. I found in Frau von Friedland at once a warm supporter who said to me, "Yes! You are the wife I have always wished for Ferdinand."

And he! This was the first occasion on which we met more intimately. Papa Holthoff left us a short time alone in his study and joined the ladies in the drawing-room opposite. Then Ferdinand knelt beside the big arm-chair in which I was seated, kissed me passionately and said gently, "Will you be mine, rise with me to all heights, and go with me through all dangers?"

I answered, again under the influence of that peculiar feeling of blissful fear which I always experienced when near him, "As if it could be otherwise?"

When Holthoff returned he heard Lassalle saying, "Oh! If this child hadn't such a weak will." Then he said, smiling, "Lassalle, you call this woman of the world always 'child.' Don't you know. . ."

"To me she will always be a child."

Holthoff held up the handle of a dagger before us in the form of a cross, and made us swear upon the holy token that we would never tell any one what had taken place in his house that afternoon. I took the oath, but Lassalle said, "No. I do not believe in this token, but I will swear by the most sacred thing there is for me on this earth—by the hand of this child."

This happy meeting ended, and we saw each other no more in Berlin.

CHAPTER XV

My grandmamma became very ill. The doctors declared she had only a few weeks to live, and I hardly left her side. I was very, very unhappy, for with the death of this clever, unusual woman, I should lose the only member of my family whom I really loved.

A few days before her death she called Yanko to her side, and told him she knew how little my mother understood me; how uncongenial my life would be under my parents' roof, in spite of its brilliant social advantages, and she made him swear never to forsake me; to protect me against misfortune even at the risk of his own happiness.

The good fellow promised, and told me of it. I felt he would keep his word. He wept and sorrowed with me when grandmamma left us, and in him I found a protector and consoler.

Soon after her death I was obliged to return to my parents, who had left Berne. As the climate did not suit my mother, they had taken a villa in Geneva. Here, as in Munich, they kept open house and everybody of note and interest in Geneva gravitated towards it.

One met there the famous scholars Claparède, Latour, Favre, and many others, also another and more interesting coterie of Hungarian political refugees,—General Klapka, Count Teleki, Count Karatschai with his family, likewise that of Count Karolyi. All of them were wafted towards Geneva

by the storms of 1848. No doubt they had all suffered from the narrowness and avarice of the so-called "aristocracy" of Geneva and hailed with delight the wider atmosphere of my father's hospitable house.

Of course I felt myself more attracted by this Hungarian society than by that of Geneva. In the latter I found only one closer acquaintance—a certain Countess Diodati, who had cosmopolitan tastes.

The winter slipped away; Yanko came for a short visit and was regarded by the whole of society as my fiancé.

I think my parents spread this report in order to quench within me every hope of marriage with Lassalle. I contradicted nothing, because I was then a very weak creature, with no will at all. In fact, as I had had no direct news from Lassalle for months, and Papa Holthoff had informed me of his great political difficulties, I decided—should marriage prove impossible with Lassalle—to accept Yanko. Anything rather than live in my parents' house with my cold-hearted mother. No doubt this sentiment was far from noble, and would have been impossible to me later, but as I was a true child of the world then, it seemed natural enough. Matters, however, were not to run so smoothly.

It was summer-time, and the soft hot Geneva climate was like poison to my nerves, therefore an invitation from an English friend to take me with her near Berne was joyfully accepted.

I must pause here to tell those unacquainted with Lassalle's life what were the important matters that made him put our love-affair in the background as a mere episode.

Perhaps, after all, neither of us had reached the climax of feeling, although Lassalle regarded our subsequent union so much as a matter of course, that he said, "We can afford to be patient. Life is long, and Destiny has ordained us for each other."

I have hitherto only spoken of Lassalle as orator

and revolutionist. Certainly he was a revolutionist, but not in the blind manner most people credited him with. His convictions were based on hard, earnest study of Greek philosophy, Roman law, and all branches of historical knowledge and political economy. His "revolution" was to evolve naturally, and bloodlessly, not to descend furiously with burning torches, but to be the outcome of the education and conviction of the masses.

In order to follow his development we must realise the fact that, in spite of his revolutionary principles, science attracted him more than politics.

However, a time came when the tranquillity of study and his cultivated enjoyment of life paled before the burning sympathy that seized his soul for the wrongs of suffering humanity.

It was the time when Bismarck was Prime Minister, and his far-seeing political eye recognised the greatness of Lassalle's capacities, and scented in him no mean rival.

Lassalle was publicly accused of wishing to upset the existing Government by political agitation in favour of universal suffrage. In his famous speech of defence he spoke as follows: "Very well, gentlemen, although I am a private individual I can tell you this. Not only do I wish to overthrow the present Government, but I shall do it within a year. Perhaps, before a year is over, universal suffrage will be granted. It is a bold game, gentlemen, and cards must be on the table. Matters have gone too far for secret diplomacy, for they are based upon iron necessity. Here, in these historical surroundings, I prophesy to you all, that perhaps before a year is over, Herr von Bismarck will have played the rôle of Robert Peel, and general and direct representation will be granted."

George Brandes in his magnificent biography of Lassalle, adds the following: "As is well known, Bismarck fulfilled the prophecy shortly after the

war with Austria." The same distinguished author, speaking of the two last years of Lassalle's life, says: "It was as if he had concentrated the activity of ten years within the last two. One was astounded at all he did in this short time." Between March 1862 and June 1864 he was the author of no less than twenty works, of which three or four have the dimensions and contents of large volumes, and the rest of them, though short and concise in form, contain enough scientific matter and brilliancy of thought to make their contents equal to that of more ambitious works. In the meantime he was holding one meeting after another, conferring with deputations from the working classes, wriggling out of various political lawsuits, founding the German Workmen's Union, carrying on an extensive correspondence, and organising the financial department of the Union. It seems as if, conscious of his premature death, his energies had developed beyond ordinary human power.

This feverish activity was the keynote of his whole personality. In his work *Franz von Sickingen*, which I consider an autobiography of his soul, and to which I shall often refer, the hero, Ulrich von Hutten, testifies to the necessity of letting his spirit find voice with which to proclaim the wrongs of the people. I wish to draw attention to this feverish activity alluded to by Brandes, to show what pushed our love affair into the background.

Regarding his development during the last two years as "agitator," Brandes says: "As agitator he stepped before the public. The very word seems to have been coined for him, for agitator in the wider sense is one who possesses the gift of inspiring the masses with the life of his own spirit, which at the same time penetrates and directs them. The art of the agitator consists in electrifying and disciplining at one and the same time, and for this purpose both trained will and spirit are necessary. An agitator must stand forth as orator, author, guerrilla-leader,

and commander-in-chief. He must be seen here and there, and work simultaneously in various places, keeping everything in harness. Lassalle's peculiar talents fitted him for all this. What was the requisite quality needed here? *Will*—always *will*—and this was the keynote of his life."

Brandes also says: "The real peculiarity of the Lassalle movement consisted in the combination of two elements—the scientific and the universal. By the latter he gained and swayed the populace, and by the former he convinced that smaller community which consisted of the élite in the world of letters."

I have made these long quotations out of Brandes' biography in order that Lassalle may not be viewed in these pages merely through the mirror of a loving woman's soul, but also through that of the cultivated mind of an eminent man of letters.

CHAPTER XVI

To return to my story.

Besides my friend Mrs. Arson, two pleasant American families were in Wabern. We passed some weeks living for our health, and then departed for a tour to Lucerne and the Rigi. At that time there was no railroad to the Rigi Kulm. We were all good horsewomen, and so were quickly on the old road leading to Kaltbad.

Before we got there, a terrible storm broke over us, so that we were thankful to take shelter in a disused barn. We were in the highest spirits, in spite of torrential rain, and suddenly the thought flashed across me that Papa Holthoff had written that Ferdinand intended coming to Switzerland for a "milk cure." Rigi Kaltbad *is* a "milk cure" place. A small urchin stood gaping at us in the doorway. I called him in and said,

"Here, youngster, do you want to earn some pence?"

"Yes!"

"Then run and ask at the hotel if Herr Lassalle is here for a cure."

"He *is* here," came the reply in guttural tones.

"Then go and fetch him," I said, laughing, in the firm conviction that the child had not understood me.

The boy disappeared and I turned to my companions, who did not understand a word of German, and told them of the "silly joke"; they were all

curious to know what the boy would bring with him, perhaps a glass of water—perhaps——

"By all the gods of Greece it is she!" rang out a voice at this moment, and so unexpectedly that it took my breath away.

Lassalle stood before me!

"Is it you? Is it really you?" was all I could say. I introduced him to the others as one of my Berlin friends, and with a few amiable words they exchanged in French, he immediately won their sympathy. He tried to persuade them to dismount and spend the evening at Kaltbad, but they all wanted to go to the Kulm and see the sunrise. As soon as this was decided, Lassalle said he would accompany us; he only wanted to lock up his letters and papers; his wallet was always ready. "Have you any idea what I was doing when the boy came and told me a beautiful lady wished to see me?"

Of course I did not know, but I was no little taken aback when he said, "I was just writing to old Boeckh and to Holthoff to ask for letters of introduction to your father. We have had enough nonsense; the matter must now be brought to a conclusion."

With an energetic movement of the head he went into the house, and returned in a few minutes, his little portmanteau packed, ready to join us.

During the short time he was absent, my friends took the opportunity to communicate their first impressions to me. They were delighted with his manners. "Dieu, qu'il est bien," my friend exclaimed, then looking at me intently said suddenly, "Are you related? You are so wonderfully alike?" Lassalle, who was just rejoining us, heard the last words and said, "Do you know that several people have said the same thing? The painter, to whom I gave your photograph to copy a picture from, said, during his work, that the anatomy of our faces was exactly the same.

"All the better," I replied, "then I shall know for certain we shall always like each other, for *every one* finds himself, to a greater or less extent, more sympathetic, if not more beautiful, than other people. But now let us start, the rain has stopped; perhaps we shall find a picturesque sunset. On to the Kulm!"

Later, I was reminded in the most striking manner of this resemblance. This was in 1874 when I was acting in Breslau. I was playing in one of Moser's little comedies, where, disguised as a boy, I had to appear in masculine garments and a short curly wig. When I went on to the stage I heard a murmur run through the house, and was told that many friends and some relations of Lassalle were at the performance, and they were almost terrified at my resemblance to Ferdinand as they remembered him in his thirteenth or fourteenth year. I do not know if this likeness of feature was really the case, but Lassalle saw it, and was pleased about it.

On our way to the Kulm, he tried to persuade me to give him a definite answer, and also to accompany him to Chamonix over the Gemmi. I would do neither the one nor the other.

He then asked me quite irritably, "Why won't you marry me at once? Why not, instead of going to Berne to-morrow from Lucerne, go to France? We could be married there without any formalities, and when we have once gone off, the parents will have to give in. It is difficult to combat a *fait accompli*."

To this I answered that I would never consent to such a romantic elopement, as long as there was a grain of hope of managing things in the usual way. He tried all the magic of his eloquence upon me, to win me over to his ideas, and only gave in at last when I said, "We cannot do it for *your* sake! Imagine the terrible scandal there would be if you—the leader of a Democratic, or, as you call it, Socialistic, party, were to carry off the daughter of a noble house."

He replied laughingly that he did not care in the least about a scandal; nevertheless he gave up teasing. In this way we reached the Kulm.

When we parted that evening, he said, "Child, we must come to some definite conclusion and plan of action this time. We can put things off no longer. You see once more in our meeting to-day we are each other's destiny, and cannot escape it."

Next morning, instead of a glorious sunrise, there was a dense fog, and we all wandered about like ghosts, wrapped up in blankets and anything we could find, for in spite of a drizzling rain, we felt sure there would be an imposing sight when the sun at last penetrated the dense masses of drifting clouds. I had passed a restless night battling with my own indecision, and pale and worn with my vigil, I stood next to Lassalle watching the sunrise. He could hardly find words to express his admiration of me that morning, and invoked all the gods of old mythology to compare me with.

When a few hours later we all appeared at breakfast, Ferdinand's charm of manner conquered not only myself, but also my English and American friends, who were astonished to find that a "red Socialist" could be a polished man of the world, and not as they imagined, a rough creature brandishing a club. He chatted about all sorts of things. He told us of his Lucullus-like feasts in Berlin, and was delighted to find that I interested myself in kitchen and cellar.

He told us of a strange experience he had with some friends who met together for the purpose of trying the effects of hashish-smoking. He said, "We all lay about on divans, and most of us soon were so horribly ill, that our one thought was to find an antidote for the opiate. So we tried strong coffee and cognac to bring us back to our normal condition."

"How did it affect you?" I asked eagerly.

"It is a strange thing," he said; "with me it increased the proportions of everything to monstrosity. Everything round me, near and far, seemed infinite; the slightest noise sounded like the blare of trumpets; and when one of the party cleared his throat, it sounded like reverberating thunder. My own hands seemed to be miles away. Altogether the experience was most extraordinary. One might get accustomed to it, but I found that one trial terrible. Even my thoughts seemed immeasurable,—too great for any human brain."

"Even for yours?" I said teasingly.

He laughed, and seemed childishly delighted at my praise.

"Yes! yes!" he said, "you 'gold fox,' my brain is just big enough for my thoughts."

He then told us of the beautiful house he was building in the Tiergarten, and of his plans for a big hall which was to be painted with pictures from the "Edda." He said, "You can imagine who is to be the Brunhild. My painter has been trying to copy the features from a beautiful photograph given me by Holthoff, but the real goddess will soon be able to serve as his model. Is this not so?"

I was so happy I could not answer. Then lunch ended.

I confided my love affair and its difficulties to my clever English friend Mrs. Arson, but she, as well as the Americans, could not understand my anxiety concerning my parents, nor how they could allow political differences of opinion to weigh in the balance against their daughter's happiness.

They instilled a little courage in me, although I understood German prejudices better than they.

Lassalle did his very best to make me give him a decided answer, but I still hesitated; I was required to act, and I suffered then from an unaccountable weakness of will, which seems to me now incomprehensible. I also dreaded the inevitable moment

when I should have to break poor Yanko's heart by telling him of my engagement to Lassalle. I likewise feared my father's anger, knowing of old his terrible outbursts of temper, although I had not suffered from any of these lately, on account of the marked coolness in our intercourse with each other.

Lassalle begged me to go with him into the library, which at that hour was deserted. How well I remember the scene! I must have been very pale from all those conflicting emotions, for Lassalle jumped up, and came towards me saying, "Good heavens! How dreadfully ill you look! I cannot have it! Is your chest weak? No! Surely this is not the case! You are only a little delicate, and this northern climate is not good for you! Well, we shall change all that. If my poor little child is ill, I will give up politics and everything else, and we will go and live in Egypt—or in India. I shall have my books and scientific studies, and will nurse my child until she becomes a real Brunhild."

I said it was not as bad as all that, and that the doctors said it was merely weakness of nerves; cold was better for me than heat.

"Doctors are fools! We will winter in Egypt, and as regards this 'not so bad as all that'—let us understand each other at last! Come, child, say 'I will'—and everything else shall be my affair."

We sat on a low divan; he had taken my hands, and looked me earnestly in the eyes. I shuddered, and pulling all my courage together, I told him I was unable to come to any decision as long as I was near him; that his presence lamed my will, and if I were to promise all he wished, I might repent it later on, and find the carrying out of it all beyond my power. "For," I added, "ask anything of me except firmness of will and energy. Remember that I am *la femme la plus femme de l'univers*, that is, unreliable and capricious."

He grew quieter and said, "I will not torment

the sick child. Become calmer, and make up your mind after we have parted; but in the name of all the gods make it up quickly! I cannot and will not bear this uncertainty much longer."

I promised that if he would leave me in Kaltbad, and let me ride alone back to the Rigi, I would decide finally on the way and give him an answer at once, favourable or otherwise. He then asked me in case I said "yes" (and he was sure I would)—if I would insist on his becoming a Christian, for "you know I am a Jew," he added. "Shall I have to change my religion?"

"No, indeed!" I replied. "I believe too little myself to give the question of religion much importance. Be Mohammedan if you like—or heathen for preference; as it is, my friends call me a Greek because I believe in so many things, but hardly in God."

He laughed heartily and said he was glad of it, as regarded the religion. "If you wished it, I would become Christian at once, but I prefer your not wishing it, for it would create a lot of bad blood, and make me look small in the eyes of a great many people; and I say frankly that I should not like this at all. But since we met again yesterday in this extraordinary manner, I too have been thinking over things during a wakeful night, and I know now how much my 'gold fox' and the thought of winning her have taken possession of my heart, and how I would rather give up everything, yes—look at me—*everything*, than lose you! So now you know it, and can laugh at the proud man who has bent the knee before his little hard-hearted regent. But here is another point. I hope this universality in religious ideas does not also apply to your love? And you don't prefer here many to one!"

The question amused me, although it was a tender point with me, and I replied frankly, "Until now, it has been yes! One man alone has never

been able really to attract me; there was always something I did not care for in each one, and since my first love, which was given to a Russian naval officer, I always fancied I should like to create one man out of two or three, and as this was not possible I mostly divided my favours."

"So! so! Well, I hope now that one will suffice," said Lassalle, highly amused. "People have told me all sorts of tales about the frivolity and the 'Greek views' of my 'gold fox,' but never mind! I too did not live like a saint, and demand no more of my wife than I give her myself. But henceforward I must insist that you change your point of view."

I wanted then to tell him all about my past life, and my "crimes against saintly morality," but he interrupted me with an energetic motion of the hand.

"No, no! For heaven's sake don't let us have any Pompeian excavations! Let us leave that to all those who care more for the past and present than for the future. Our past life lies behind us. Let us finish with it. In the future we will belong to each other, and cling to one another. That is enough!"

Mrs. Arson came in to tell us it was time to go, and in spite of Lassalle's entreaties she would not postpone our departure. He begged her to be careful of my health—said he had a right to ask this; that I ought not in my delicate state to be riding for hours in fog and damp, and brought up various arguments.

But I urged on our departure; I longed to be alone, in order to think things out quietly, and become clear on all points.

So we mounted our horses in the icy rain, and as Lassalle was going with us to Kaltbad, we had one more hour together. Although the conversation was general, he looked after me like a mother, and did his best to protect me from the cold.

He chatted about literature and philosophy, and he said gleefully, "The child is such a little silly in

so many things; how happy I shall be in initiating her in the treasures of philosophy and literature, for she knows really nothing about either."

When we said good-bye, he took both my hands in his, kissed them passionately, and said, "We part but for a short time, my best-beloved. You are as sweet as a child, but as weak as one. Oh, if I could only instil one drop of my mighty will and energy into those blue veins of yours. Perhaps I might succeed in doing so by magnetic force. Here! take my hands." I obeyed. "So! I *will* that you shall have more will! Say yes, *et je me charge du reste*!" I promised him I would decide before I got to Waggis, and then we parted. My friends, knowing I must have so much to think over, let me ride on alone; and after turning the matter over from all sides in my heart and brain, I at length decided to say "yes."

When we were on the boat returning from Waggis to Lucerne, I told my friends of my decision, and they were overjoyed, as Lassalle had quite won their hearts. They said he deserved it. I already held two messages in my hand from him, a telegram and a note, the latter delivered to me by a little boy whom he had sent post-haste on foot to Waggis. In both of them he implored me not to cross the lake in this foggy weather, but to wait at Waggis for him to take me home safely.

I had replied that this was impossible, and we returned to Wabern.

CHAPTER XVII

After a lapse of so many years, a letter I wrote to Holthoff will serve best to illustrate my frame of mind. I wrote to him the first morning after our return.

Wabern, *July* 28, 1864.

Where can I begin and where end with all I have to tell you to-day? Perhaps, when this letter is delivered into your hands, you will be sitting comfortably in your room, little dreaming that your child is going to fill you with worry and anxiety.

The moment has come when your child implores your help, and there is no one who can help but you. I am so worried and anxious, that I know I am writing incoherently. Oh, if you were only here that I might take both your hands in mine, look up to you with imploring eyes, and beg in my tenderest voice, "Papa help, do help your poor little daughter, for she needs all your assistance and protection." Then I'm sure you would help, for you would realise that it is only possible for us to go forwards, not backwards. I come to you to-day as to a father who loves and spoils his little daughter, as to a friend who has promised to aid his little friend, as to a great lawyer who must help his client in word and deed. Have you any idea now, Papa, whom I am writing about? Yes, yes, you are quite right! He has given you and me, especially me, many an anxious moment; but the matter now is deadly earnest, and I must tell you everything as it happened, else you will think me quite mad.

Well, then, the great romance of my life is about to culminate in my marriage, as soon as possible, with Lassalle. I know what serious consequences this decision will entail, but nevertheless it must be so, for I know it is the will of God, that it has all been predestined, and no man can escape fate. There are still many obstacles. I shall be able to overcome them all; but one thing is too terrible—it robs me of my courage and makes me wretched. It is this—that I must break my poor friend Yanko's heart, destroy his youthful dreams, and

all his happiness. Now that I feel my future and my destiny are in Lassalle's hands, I can only pray God to give me strength to overcome my own heart and become wicked.

How can I even ask you to befriend Yanko in this terrible time? He has no one but me to protect and love him.

Oh, how he will despise me, and from his point of view, I must appear despicable, for he could never understand the demoniacal power that Ferdinand has over me. You understand that, and will agree with me when I tell you that I care for Yanko too much to marry him with that feeling for Lassalle in my heart. It would have caused me to desert him sooner or later. Better now than later, for at least he will not be made ridiculous in the eyes of the world. He will be unhappy, but not dishonoured. Lassalle swore to me, and you know how strong his will is, "You shall be mine, either now as an angel, or later on as a devil." I feel that he is right, and know that God intended us for each other. Therefore, I have decided, and he knew my decision early this morning.

Since last night, I have received four telegrams from my Satanic lord and master, and he is coming to this little place to-morrow evening, where I am staying with a dear friend who is of the same opinion as he is, that I must accept my fate from God's hands. You are my witness that I have done my best to fight against my own heart, and still more against my mind, for I would gladly have acted as my parents wished; but in spite of all, I grew more and more interested in him. Now let me tell you how it all happened. You know that I am here for my health, and accident—or rather Providence—has willed that my friend must come to this little place, not far from Berne, for the health of her delicate children. A nice American family lives near us too.

After a few days we began to feel bored, and decided to take a trip to Lucerne and the Rigi. You remember, Papa dear, telling me that Lassalle was going to do a cure somewhere there? Our Murray told us that a milk cure can only be done on the Rigi-Scheideck. I told my friends I had an acquaintance there, and would like to meet him, and as I like to be straightforward, told them the whole story. We heard at Waggis that we could not ride to the Scheideck, as it was too far, and the roads were bad. You can imagine how disappointed I was. I arrived at Kaltbad in a melancholy frame of mind, and as you know, found him there. Could I ever describe our delight? We all went up the Rigi together, and the others declared he seemed walking on air, and devoured me with his eyes to such an extent that they wonder there was

anything left of me. We discussed all kinds of things, and he implored me to say "yes." But I was firm as long as I was with him. When I hesitated he held my hands, and tried to infuse his will-power into me, saying I was as sweet as a child and as weak as one. He may have been successful, for at that moment, as if his wish were being fulfilled, I said, "Before I leave Waggis I shall have decided." He left us in Kaltbad with an *au revoir*. I shall never forget that return journey, how I fought with myself and suffered! The moment I arrived here I received a letter from him entreating me not to cross the lake in such bad weather—he was so anxious about my health. Then I knew where my fate lay. If you had only seen his tenderness and care of me during those two days, you would hardly have recognised your egotistical friend!

Friday, July 29.

Yesterday my letter was interrupted by the arrival of one from my stormy friend, which gave me so much to consider that I could not finish this one. Heaven alone knows how all this is going to end!

I shall wait to finish this letter until I have seen him, as no doubt there will be a good deal more to tell you; I expect him either to-night or to-morrow.

Now to continue.

When I arrived in Wabern on Tuesday evening, I wrote him my decision and conditions. They were as follows: Firstly, that we should do everything possible to conciliate my parents, in order to gain their consent for the sake of appearances. Should this fail, in spite of our efforts, *eh bien! alors, tant pis pour eux!* In this case, his plan is to elope with me to Egypt —a plan he says you know and approve of.

My second condition is, that now we have decided matters, everything is to be carried out as quickly as possible. This for two reasons. Firstly, because of Yanko (Lassalle knows nothing of this). Secondly, because I do not wish the world to gossip about matters which do not concern it, and of which it would only take a one-sided view. This would lead to all sorts of terrible scenes, which, in the present state of my weakened health and nerves, I really could not stand.

Will he accept these conditions? Heaven knows! In reply to my letter he merely telegraphed yesterday: "Letter received. Bravissimo! Arrive 29th, latest 30th." He wants to accompany me to Geneva, but he must on no account do this. It will be difficult to prevent the demon having his own way, but I trust my will in this case will prevail over his.

The Countess is in Wildbad, and he wants me to know her.

I believe he will ask her to come here *d'un jour ou d'autre.* Oh, dear Papa! if you were only here! I feel so lonely,—everything is against me, yet I must struggle on.

My people know nothing—not even that I met Lassalle on the Rigi.

I think the best thing will be to spring it on them, make the whole affair a *coup d'état.* Oh! if you only knew how difficult it is to act against the wishes of my family, and those whom I love and honour!

Just look at the extraordinary sequence of events. Why did the doctor order me a change of air just then? Why did it so happen that my parents could not accompany me, and that I had to go with a friend? Why did that friend suggest a tour on the Rigi, instead of the Bernese highlands? Why was Lassalle on the Kaltbad instead of the Scheideck, and why did we choose the most difficult route, instead of taking the one over Küssnacht or Gersau; also why should Lassalle, who is hardly ever at home, be occupied just at that moment in writing to you? *Enfin*, you see, Papa, it *had* to be!

God knows what our arrival at home will lead to, or what he and I had best do to attain our object. If only you were here to help with your advice and friendship, which knows no yesterday nor to-morrow! As it is, I stand quite alone in his demoniacal power. There is no looking back now. I must go forward, even should the way lie over torn and bleeding hearts. Tell me, what is the worst they can do to us? I am twenty-one, therefore of age, I believe, according to Bavarian law. Beyond this I know nothing, nor what could happen to us in case of elopement, or who would be on our side besides the Gräfin.

Now I must end for to-day, as before he arrives I have to write the awful letter to my poor dear Yanko.

God is my witness that I would far rather receive than be obliged to write such a letter, knowing the suffering it will entail.

Good-bye. Answer me soon, if only to tell me you love the child who loves you so dearly. Let me know if you are able to come here, and believe, under all circumstances, in the eternal friendship and gratitude of

YOUR LOVING LITTLE DAUGHTER.

1.30, just received another telegram from *Tourbillon*! He will be here at six to-day!

It was so difficult to write to Yanko, that it took me nearly all night. The letter was a mixture of the grossest selfishness and the most sincere regret. I told him I was fully aware of the shameful way he

was being treated, but appealed to him as to my confidant in the Lassalle affair. He knew that, as I had told him, Lassalle's influence was such that, if I met him again, and he wished me to be his wife, I would leave everything in the world and follow him. I quoted the following beautiful lines from Geibel's "Brunhild":—

"Wenn über ihn der Blitz herniederzündet,
Schiltst du den Scheiterhaufen, dass er brennt?
So aber kam's auf mich mit Allgewalt,
Als Siegfried nahte. All mein Wesen
Schlug in Flammen jauchzend auf!
Und hätte Hela selbst, der Nacht entsteigend,
All ihre Schrecken zwischen uns gestürmt,
Ich hätt' ihn doch geliebt!"

The remainder of the letter was written, as most of our correspondence was, in French. I told him how, in spite of the suffering I was inflicting on him, I looked on him as my truest friend, and if, as we feared, my parents remained inexorable, I counted on his help and protection, as that of the person nearest on earth to me.

As I wrote, I knew I was right, and that the dear noble fellow would always keep the promise he made to my grandmother on her death-bed.

Day was dawning when I finished this most difficult letter. Then only I wrote to Lassalle:

Shall I begin by thanking you for your dear lines, which reached me just as I was crossing the bridge of boats; or by telling you how long and how difficult the way to Waggis appeared? No! You know both. You know how delighted I was at your few words of remembrance, but my heart beat quicker as I read of your tender care of me and my health. That I could not do as you wished was because, as you too say, my will is as weak as a child's.

Then followed all I had written to Holthoff concerning my decision and conditions.

Of course, he must have known beforehand what my answer would be; I received one or two telegrams from him hourly; he comfortably took up his post

in the telegraph office of the hotel Kaltbad. As he wrote to me, it amused him to listen to the tick-tick of the machine, and to fancy he was touching me with it. This fancy, arising perhaps from the knowledge that his words and thoughts would reach me in a few minutes. I received six letters in those two days besides the telegrams. What letters!

They, as well as everything Lassalle had ever given me, were afterwards taken away by my father.

His political and legal works have made people familiar with his flowery and poetic style of writing. Imagine, then, what his love letters must have been to the woman who held his whole heart!

The only book written on our tragic story which I find sympathetic was one by an anonymous author entitled: *The Sufferings of Lassalle.* It spoke of his love in the following terms: "When a truly demoniacal love clutches at the fibres of a human being, then there exists for him neither God nor politics, neither fatherland nor family ties, nor law. The following pages will testify to such a love which was beyond the power of any poet to describe."

How often in after-life I have regretted the loss of these letters; I could never have felt so utterly wretched and deserted if I had been allowed to keep them, for the love they breathed would have spoken to me from beyond the grave.

All were taken away from me. Many of them are imprinted in my memory as clearly as if I had read them yesterday. In one of them he described a sunset, which he saw the evening after my departure. Its flaming glories seemed to glow like the illumination of our love; the whole universe and all the beauties of nature seemed woven by him into the leading chords of the *motif* of our happiness.

Another time he wrote:

> Art thou ambitious? What would my "golden child" say, if I led her in triumph to Berlin in a car drawn by six white horses, as the greatest lady in the land?

And again:

It really is most foolish to worry about politics, and the weal and woe of other people. That was all very well when I was alone, and had nothing better to do, but now! Shall I throw it all up, and shall we go far, far away wherever my ruler, the child, wishes, and live only for our happiness, our studies, and a few friends?

CHAPTER XVIII

He was here at last, my beloved, my hero—my eagle, as I loved to call him, on account of his bright eagle-like eyes! On his arrival, I was clasped in his arms as if nothing could ever part us. We kissed each other again and again, gazing rapturously into each other's eyes. In the whole world, there were no two people so completely happy as we were. For, in our case, everything was in harmony, heart, mind, and soul. The more I saw of him, the more I was convinced that this man, with his great mind and charming disposition, would conquer my parents, and take their hearts by storm.

In the happy days that followed we were the gayest of the gay. When his high spirits ran away with him, he was delighted when I called out, as I did to my big dog at home: *Couche-toi!* In this he reminded me very much of my father. We roamed the forests together, rejoicing in every tree and flower, and breaking into exclamations of delight every time we caught a glimpse of the mountains through the opening in the trees.

In fact we revelled in every moment of these incomparably beautiful days. He was delighted at my sense of humour, which he also shared. He read me portions of one of his pamphlets, *Herr Julian Schmidt*, which amused me very much, and I laughed continually over the witty and sometimes spiteful remarks. "Just imagine," he said, "what happened to me in connection with it. This brochure

was published two years ago; last year I went to a little place in Switzerland, and met in the garden of the hotel a perfectly charming couple, with whom, almost immediately, I had a most animated conversation. We got on so well that we arranged to go for a long walk together before dinner, and proposed also a drive on the morrow. When we got back to the hotel, we found we had forgotten to introduce ourselves to each other. I looked in the visitors' book, and there, what did I see but 'Dr. and Mrs. Julian Schmidt, Berlin.' I need hardly tell you how quickly I disappeared."

"But hadn't you ever seen him in Berlin?"

"No, strange to say, I had not. I wonder how the poor Schmidts felt when they read *my* name in the list?"

When we had done laughing about this, Ferdinand said, "Here is another brochure of mine that will amuse you—my answer to the accusation people brought against me that I wished to place might before right. The title is '*Might* and *Right*.'" He had brought it with him in his portmanteau, and read as follows:—

"If I had created the world, it is very possible that, out of deference to the *Volkszeitung* and Count Schwerin, I might have made an exception for once and put 'Right' before 'Might,' because, strange to say, this corresponds with my own wishes and ethics! Unfortunately I never had the chance of creating the world, and must therefore decline all responsibility and both blame and praise in regard to it."

I was much interested in all the proofs he brought forward that in this world *Might* rules *Right*, and often thought of this when, a few weeks later, I suffered so bitterly under the power of might.

Some of the most charming hours we spent were devoted to poetry. Lassalle, like myself, knew most of the classic writers by heart, and we revelled in declaiming them to each other. It delighted me

most to hear him recite his "Franz von Sickingen." He confessed that in Ulrich von Hütten he had drawn his own portrait and expressed his own thoughts.

This, of course, interested me doubly, as I learnt to know him, as it were, from the biography written by himself. Later on, how well I treasured many of the prophetic passages.

The following lines were soon verified :—

> "A demon follows in my steps,
> To turn the heart of joy to misery."

Just now our path was strewn with happiness, and we were thankful to the gods for it.

During these wonderful days we discussed amongst other things his sources of income, and I was delivered from a nightmare on hearing he was in no way dependent on the Countess. He said in conclusion, "Never come to me with a proposition to earn money by writing. Mostly women look upon this as a way out of perplexity, and so many of them have said to me, 'Why don't you write more, and make money?' but I hate the prostitution of the pen, and would never demean myself by it. I consider it more despicable and more degrading for a man than the prostitution of the body, for my mind is more sacred to me than that which envelops it. Therefore, mark well, nothing will come of that—no authorship, above all no journalism."

The same day he spoke again about his liaison with Countess Hatzfeld. As regards the latter, my feelings towards her were mixed with a little fear, a little jealousy, but most of all childish affection.

Whilst speaking of her, Lassalle showed himself to me in quite a new light, and one that increased my respect for him. He asked me what my opinion was in regard to his connection with the Countess, to which I replied that I supposed she had been his mistress when he was quite young, and now that she was old, but, as my friend had told me, extremely

clever, no doubt his former love had been turned into a great enduring friendship.

My answer pleased him, and he said, "Then you do not insist on my giving up the Countess?"

"Give her up? How could I think of such a thing? I shall be delighted to make her acquaintance, but would she have to live with us, always?" I added, anxiously.

This question amused him immensely. In the highest spirits he caught me in his arms, and repeated my question again and again with laughter and kisses, assuring me,

"No, my gold fox, she would *not*! Anyhow, she never lives with me. Come under this glorious lime-tree, and listen to what I have to tell you. Jealousy of the good Countess (I wondered if any man who had once adored me would ever speak of me as "*Good* Helene"—horrible!) is quite out of the question. For many years she has been my confidante in all my little love affairs, which, as you know, I have looked upon as an antidote to my serious work."

I nodded, for I knew his reputation. He said, laughing, "I wrote to my sister the other day saying that I consider the greatest relaxation from work is to be amongst pretty women. The Countess knows this too—and now my *one* beautiful wife will have to replace all that to me. Seriously, do you not realise that the hold the Countess has over me is of quite a different nature?"

He stretched out his well-formed hand, and continued, "Into this hand, which was then that of a boy, she placed her destiny. I proved to her that the hand was that of a man, but at that time she did not know it. She gave me her full confidence, and that binds me to her for ever."

This noble point of view filled me with enthusiasm. What he then told me concerning his relations with the Countess is more fully described in a most extraordinary letter to which I will make reference later.

The letter is one printed among the first of the *Intimate Letters* and the portion of it referring to the Countess is as follows :—

She is identical with my own soul. What is soul? It is the unity of the collective whole, the central point of the entire mass of impressions we ever experience. That is what she is to me. Therefore, she is a necessity to my happiness. Further, she is the person on whom depends the integrity of my individuality. If I lost a leg or an arm, I should not consider myself so maimed as if I had lost the Countess. Therefore, it follows that she must be dearer to me than myself, and that I must display more tenderness towards her than to the remaining portion of my individuality, and I can say of her what Wallenstein said of Max: "She stands before me like my own youth, that stormy youth to which my thoughts often revert sentimentally. She is the living incorporation of that youth to me—a time most people look back upon with tender recollections. Doubtless as long as she is in my life, I shall feel more or less young; if I ever lost her, I should feel as though I had changed my personality. If she had suffered, and still suffers, is it not because I have impregnated her with my ideas, my feelings, and my points of view, and because she has framed her life accordingly? To me, therefore, she represents my own ideas and my own feelings. Is it not natural that I should treat this, my second self, with more consideration than my *own* self?"

Of course Ferdinand was delighted to find my opinion on his relationship with the Countess so different from that of all the other women with whom he had had love affairs, and especially that of the lady to whom he wrote the letter. All this was another proof to me of the greatness and nobility of his soul, and my adoration for him grew boundless.

In spite of my youth, he must have placed me on a pinnacle, to consider me capable of understanding so entirely his ideas.

In consequence of this conversation, I wrote a letter to the Countess, full of childlike admiration and enthusiasm. To this I received no answer.

He painted our future together in the most glowing colours, and asked if I would be satisfied with the life he could offer me. On my replying,

"Completely," he was pleased, and said, "I want you to love me as I really am, but are you not at all ambitious?"

"My ambition is to be the wife of Ferdinand Lassalle and to share his fate."

He laughed, rubbed his hands, and said, "Your choice is not a bad one, and you will never be the worse for it. One day Ferdinand Lassalle's wife will be a woman in the highest position. Let us discuss it quietly. Have you any idea of my plans and projects? No! Then look at me (raising himself up). Do I look as if I would be satisfied with any secondary place in the kingdom? Do you believe that I would sacrifice the sleep of my nights, the marrow of my bones, the power of my lungs, in order to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for some one else? Do I look like a political martyr? No! I will act and fight, but I will also enjoy the fruits of the combat, and will place on your brow that which, for the present, we will call your diadem.

"Believe me, it would be a proud moment to be acclaimed 'President' of a Republic, chosen by the people. To rest secure on the goodwill of a nation, more securely than to be 'King, by the Grace of God,' and to sit upon a rotten worm-eaten throne. Come here! Stand by my side, and behold both of us in the glass! Is it not a proud and regal couple? Did not nature create two such beings in her happiest mood, and don't you think that power, the highest power, would suit us very well? Yes, child, you will be glad of your choice. Long live the Republic, and the golden-haired wife of the President!"

He had talked himself into a perfect fever, and I felt myself carried along on the stream of his enthusiasm. My eyes were lifted in faith and admiration towards him, and when he saw this he continued, "You do believe in our star, do you not? Since I found you, my way to glory seems clearer than ever; united to you, I cannot fail to reach the goal.

So, all hail to us and to our friends! Of course we have enemies as numerous as the sands upon the seashore. In my case it is natural, and in yours comprehensible; but no matter how much they bespatter the hems of our garments with their venom, they nevertheless will have to bend the knee when we make our triumphant entry. Ambition such as this even you must understand, little fox. 'Ferdinand the chosen of the people,' is a proud name, and, if all goes well, it shall be mine."

After a short time, he added, "It will be a hard fight, notwithstanding, and the time is hardly yet ripe for it; we may have to wait a long time in useless martyrdom, in fruitless discussions, or perhaps even in absolute idleness. *Vedremo!* we have many hours to think of it. You have only just become mine, for this is the first time I have shown you my true self."

Regarding his dreams for the future, George Brandes describes them in a pathetic manner when he speaks of his sojourn on the Rhine:

"Everywhere the same sight. Hundreds of workmen met him, cheering, at every station, and a long procession accompanied him to his home, which was decorated with wreaths and bouquets. They presented him with tokens of esteem. In all towns and streets there were serenades in his honour, triumphal arches, garlands, and inscriptions; acclamations burst forth from a thousand throats. Wherever he went, workmen, young and old, in carts covered with banners and wreaths, pressed forward to welcome him—proud if they could press his hand, or get a greeting from him. Sometimes as many as twenty-five carriages covered with wreaths followed him in cortège. In order to give an impression of the precise state of mind of the people, I will quote passages from the Ronsdorf newspaper of May 23:

When the cortège approached the borders of Ronsdorf, one saw every one was afoot, old and young; the multitudes covered

the heights. At the entrance to the village was another garland surrounded with a crown and bearing the inscription, "Willkommen Dr. Ferdinand Lassalle viel tausendmal im Ronsdorftal."

Similar inscriptions and floral tribunes decorated the whole of his route. The President's carriage was easily recognised by the placard, "*Let us unite*," and masses of flowers were thrown into it by the wives and daughters of the working men. At this spot, crowds of skilled workmen from Solingen and Wermelskirchen were waiting to receive the President and join the procession. The rejoicings were indescribable, and continued all the way to Ronsdorf. It was an interesting sight to see the pitch of eagerness of the crowd who, when the road suddenly went downhill, and the carriages advanced more quickly, started running full tilt in order to keep up with the procession. Such were their efforts that most of them arrived simultaneously with the carriages.

Everything was to be even greater than this. He would be satisfied with nothing less than the homage of an entire people bowing before the President of their choice. I smiled happily at all these dreams. I believed in their realisation when he stood before me then, like a god of war, his keen glance searching space.

CHAPTER XIX

On one of our last evenings together, my friends had given a little champagne supper in honour of our engagement. When it was over, and I returned to my room somewhat fatigued, I went to the window to enjoy the delicious moonlight and the cool night air.

Suddenly two arms were flung round me, and Ferdinand swung himself upon my window ledge, which was near the ground, and took no notice of my anxious expostulations. Oh, the glorious hours of that summer night! Neither before nor afterwards did I know anything more beautiful! The full moon shone in the heavens, and from the highlands the eternal snow giants greeted us. All was silent, holy, and only our whispering voices floated out on the heavenly night.

When I protested against his remaining so late, he whispered, "Be silent. I will sit here quite quietly, and chat until you are too tired to say to me *couche-toi.* The night is so glorious, my heart so full, and you so near! How could one sleep? Let us chat, or pray to the moon, or, by merely repeating to each other the two words 'Ferdinand,' 'Helene,' compose anew love's 'song of songs.'"

We sat on—he on the outside of the window ledge, I on the inside—and talked in happy whispers of our still happier future. He told me about his old housekeeper Johanna, and how pleased she would be when he brought home a wife who "understood

what good living meant, and yet, like my 'golden fox,' would not trouble herself about housekeeping."

"No, indeed!" I said, "I don't understand a thing about it, and should only make myself ridiculous."

"Heaven be praised!" he replied; "I should hate to have a wife who looked after the kitchen more than she did me! Johanna has kept house for me for the last ten years, so she can go on doing it."

Then we began talking of our friends and acquaintances, and I mentioned what the wife of Bismarck's secretary had said about him, and asked him:

"Is it true that you have all sorts of secret doings with Bismarck?"

He sat still a moment, then laughed softly, almost uncannily, and taking my hand, he half whispered, "This child!—did one ever hear the like? With these little fingers (for you know it is ridiculous to have such little fingers!), with these little elfin paws, she turns over my most precious secrets, that I keep like costly gems in the secret treasury of my heart. She rummages about there, treats these priceless jewels as if they were her own possessions, strews a few of them about as if they were chaff, and then demands the best of all for herself, as an ornament for her hair! But I adore this naive impudence! Though you had no idea what you were asking for, you shall have it.

"Yes, indeed! I *did* go and see Bismarck! The great 'iron' one wanted to captivate me, and iron, you know, is a very necessary metal, so strong, so tough, so proof against blows and knocks! What has iron not been able to achieve in this world? Nearly everything is made with, or rendered firm by iron—nearly everything! But there exists another and different metal, more supple and pliable—not intended for heroic weapons, and yet mightier than this omnipotent iron; it is gold! What iron has destroyed, gold can build up again; it was a rain of gold which seduced the heart of Danaë! Yes, yes, you golden fox, it is a question which of the two metals is the mightier

and more powerful. It is true that up there in 'iron circles' gold is Jewish, but the main point is, what it achieves! Iron with time gets rusty, and rusty iron belongs to the lumber-room! Then away with it to the lumber-room of centuries and history!

"To return to Bismarck. You asked me what he wanted from me, and I from him. Be satisfied with this, that nothing happened, and nothing could happen, because we were both too clever; each saw how clever the other was, and we could only have ended (politically speaking) by laughing in each other's face. Of course we were too well bred to do this, and it all ended in a visit and witty conversation."

"How did you like Bismarck? Did you find him clever?" I asked.

"Clever! What *is* clever? If you and I are clever, then Bismarck is not. He is mighty, imposing—is just 'iron.' If one refines iron, it becomes steel, out of which one can make sharp, gleaming, splendid weapons, but they always remain weapons. I prefer gold—gold such as my fox wears upon her head; and it has been given to me in the mysterious power of attracting human beings and making them mine. You shall see one day, my darling, what our gold is able to achieve."

After a short pause, I remarked, "But you yourself speak a great deal of weapons, of blood and strife; and after all, revolutions are not made without weapons and without iron."

"Child, child! What is it you do not want to know in this moonlight night? The results of thousands of years and of the profoundest study, and you ask me lightly to give you all this—to throw it in your lap.

"To speak of struggles, to call to arms is not really as vile as mowing down one's fellow-creatures with blood-smeared hands, and with a cold heart! Do you understand, clever little fox, what weapons I allude to? I hold my golden weapons of the mind,

the art of eloquence, charity, benefits to the poor, and the making of men of the working classes and the poverty-stricken; and above all, my will, far higher than the mere brute force of the rusty Middle Ages. Blood and the sword are to be the last resources, if they will not have it otherwise. But I think they will, and will learn to fear without the sword. But look, day is dawning, and we are going to Niesen to-day, so sleep well, and dream of me."

He folded me once more in his arms, said, "What a glorious wife I shall make out of this adored child, when she is mine"; then he left me.

The picnic came off on the morrow. I found mountain-climbing difficult, on account of the weakness of my lungs. Lassalle helped me by placing his hands against my back, and bidding me lean all my weight against them, saying encouragingly from time to time, "Breathe slowly, lean back! Don't talk," and in this way I got up splendidly.

It was a lovely day, with brilliant sunshine, magnificent views, balmy breezes, and Lassalle in his happiest mood. No one who has not known this gifted being at his zenith, as he was in those days, can realise to what extent he could inspire those around him to give forth of their highest and best. My friends realised this too, and again and again they said that no parents could refuse their daughter to such a man. I believed this too.

Our homeward journey was not so easy. The other ladies and I were all very tired, and Lassalle made use of his most excellent conversational powers to encourage us over the difficulties of the descent. They acted on us like champagne. He told us of his friendship with Heinrich Heine, and of the letter I have already spoken of. He told how he, a mere boy at the time, took up the cause of the almost dying poet, arranged all his most complicated family affairs, and obtained for him a settled yearly income. He knew, and quoted to us, whole pages out of

Heine's letters, to which we listened with the greatest interest. The following quotations from these letters I now copy from George Brandes, as he no doubt possessed the originals, whereas I had heard merely certain passages quoted by Lassalle. The latter told us at the time that Heine said that he would die like a gladiator, with a smile upon his lips. I remembered a few weeks later, with streaming eyes, these terribly prophetic words.

The sick poet, in speaking of the young gladiator, mentioned him as his nearest friend and comrade-in-arms. The letter is as follows:—

> I confine myself to thanking you to-day. No one has ever shown such zeal and clearness of mind in action. You have, indeed, every right to be conceited. We others only usurp this privilege. In comparison with you I am only a modest fly.

And again, in another part:

> Good-bye, and believe me when I say that you are dear to me beyond words. I am glad I was not mistaken in you. I never trusted any one so much, I who have been suspicious, not by nature, but as the result of unfortunate experiences. Since I have received your letters my courage has risen and I am better.

It is almost pathetic to see this man of forty-six, a great poet, broken down by sorrows, realising the protection of this young soul of iron which only twenty summers have served to mould to unyielding strength, and which still has enough courage left to serve all who appeal to him for help.

Lassalle also told us many amusing anecdotes in connection with his stay in Paris at the time. We enjoyed one particularly, of which I spoke on some other occasion.

Lassalle had a letter of introduction to a well-known and very beautiful lady, and according to the German etiquette of the time, called on her at twelve o'clock, a most unusual hour for Paris. He rang the bell and gave, as he thought, his card to the man-servant who opened the door. Whereupon the man

ushered him into an elegant boudoir saying, "Prenez place, Madame viendra tout de suite!" The door opposite opened, and a lady, in very pronounced *négligé*, with bare feet pushed into dainty slippers, came in saying, "Ah! vous voilà, bonjour!" sat herself down on the sofa, pushed off a slipper, and presented to him a sweet little rosy foot!

Lassalle was, of course, extremely astonished, but pulled himself quickly together, pressed a kiss on the little foot, and said, "Charmé, Madame, de cette nouvelle manière de faire connaissance. C'est bien plus joli, et surtout plus intime que d'embrasser la main!"

The lady jumped up, put up her lorgnon in indignation, which was speedily transformed into embarrassment.

"Mais, mon Dieu, Monsieur! Qui êtes-vous? Je vous ai pris pour le pédicure, vous m'aviez envoyé cette carte."

In taking up the cards that had been left on him at the hotel that morning, the advertisement card of the chiropodist in question had been among them, and he had inadvertently sent it in to the lady instead of his own. Explanation! Tableau! Peals of laughter! "And," he added, "I never had reason to regret having kissed this foot. I was right; it was the most intimate beginning, and my principle has always been never to take a step backwards."

His high spirits inspired us with renewed energy, but we were, nevertheless, glad to follow the men's advice, and take a short-cut across the fields.

Our jokes and laughter were interrupted by the most dreadful howls and bellowings from all sides. It was a dark night, and the moon had not yet risen, so we could distinguish nothing in our first terrified surprise at the attack. The ladies began to scream, as a shower of blows delivered from clubs, sticks, and fists descended upon us. We saw ourselves surrounded by a herd of creatures that could only

be described as devils in half-human and half-animal form. They were horrible *crétins* — the very lowest form of humanity. Not one or two, such as one sometimes meets in mountain villages, but a whole colony of them—dwarf-like, yet sturdy, and their rage lent them the strength of bears. Later, we heard that an entire community of these creatures inhabited this district.

We defended ourselves against their onslaught as best we could, but Lassalle was the only man of the party whose strength was superior to theirs. He struck right and left—a very Siegfried in contest against the hellish brood! Our other male companions were short and slight, and unable to reckon with these enraged creatures, of whose guttural ejaculations we could understand nothing. We all fought desperately with our umbrellas, sticks, and leather straps, but all to no purpose, for our garments hung in shreds upon us, when at last the creatures gave in, and burst into lamentations and tears.

It was only now that we were able to gather from them that our short-cut had led us over their harvest-fields. They were furious at seeing their crops in danger, and were only pacified at last by presents of money and assurances of our goodwill. Upon this they withdrew.

But what an appearance we presented, especially Lassalle, who, during his courageous defence, had received two heavy blows on his nose and forehead! His face was all swollen and bruised; and we limped home in a sorry plight.

Our one idea now was to postpone the journey home to Geneva, which had been planned for the following day, and to nurse the nose back to its pristine beauty.

Next morning, his face was purple and brown, but his good spirits helped us to regain our own. We laughed at the "Dandy" who wished to captivate mamma, looking like a ruffian; and his nose having

been bandaged, we were as merry as children discussing the long and happy future that lay before us.

I had to describe my parents minutely to him; also my brothers and sisters and all our most intimate friends, as he intended captivating every one of them.

To those days belong several letters to the Countess, which were published in the *Sorrows of Lassalle*. Among others he wrote the following :—

The matter is becoming serious, very serious, and the magnitude of its proportion fills me with preoccupation. I cannot retrace my steps now, and I really hardly know why I should wish to. She is a beautiful woman, and the only one whose individuality makes her peculiarly fitted to be my wife. The only woman that even you would approve of. Therefore, *en avant*, across the Rubicon. Now that my old power and happiness have returned to me, I shall be able to bring matters to a brilliant conclusion.

And again :

Her disposition is like one of Goethe's conceptions, for in spite of her worldly bringing up the social veneer has never touched her real self. Her only fault, and this is a gigantic one, is that she has no will whatever—not a vestige of it. In itself, this is, of course, a fault, but if we become man and wife, it would perhaps cease to become one, for I will have enough for both of us, and she would be as an instrument in the hand of an artist. It will naturally render our union more difficult to accomplish. To-day she is decided, but how long would a being so devoid of will be able to resist opposition ? I mean to talk to her very seriously about this, before I take any steps whatever.

In a letter written three days later he says :

Everything is now definitely arranged. It is no small piece of luck for me at the age of thirty-nine and a half to have found so beautiful a woman, whose personality is so sympathetic to mine, who loves me, and—a necessity in my case—whose will is absolutely subservient to mine. God knows what the parents in Geneva will say to it all ; anyhow, both of us have decided to carry it through, no matter what happens.

In a third letter, dated Berne, August 3, he writes :

Helene has now decided, if I wished it, to run away from her parents to-morrow, and follow me to the world's end as a

gipsy. I sincerely hope and believe that her parents will consent at once, or at least, after a few attacks of the stormy eloquence with which I intend to bombard them; otherwise, by heavens, I will stand at nothing!

As I said before, I had written to the Countess. My letter was full of feeling and admiration for the "motherly friend of my eagle," and I had assured her of my "childlike and affectionate devotion."

How inexperienced I must have been in those days, in spite of all my worldliness, and how little Lassalle must have understood women's character, notwithstanding his many love episodes! It is comprehensible in his case, for every genius is a child at heart. But how I could, even young as I was, have imagined, even for a moment, that this other woman would ever allow another to usurp the place she had held so long as undivided ruler in the heart of this great man, is to me now incomprehensible. She might have condoned his little love affairs, but she would never forgive a serious and deep love. One can hardly blame her looking at it from a human point of view.

If we had not been so full of ourselves and our own happiness in those first days, it must have struck me as curious that I had received no answer to the letter I had written to Papa Holthoff; but neither of us troubled.

Lassalle believed implicitly in his confidante, and we were so lost in each other that neither of us wondered at the silence of Holthoff and the Countess. That my old friend, who at the same time was a friend of my family, and who had hitherto been entirely on my side, could ever play a double game never occurred to either of us. On the contrary, Lassalle said that the moment he arrived in Geneva he would telegraph to Holthoff to join him. He counted on him as the most powerful intercessor with my parents, and said that, as his lawyer, he could arrange all business details with my father. We both looked forward

to meeting this friend, who would be so pleased at our happiness.

These few happy days ended and the time arrived for us to say good-bye. How full of joy and hope we were! Ferdinand was to follow me by the next train, and we were to meet the same afternoon at my friend Caroline R.'s. We did not travel by the same train, for the sake of appearances, much to the astonishment of my American and English friends, who looked upon this deference to conventionality as ridiculous. We did it also in order to give my parents no cause for displeasure. I therefore travelled to Geneva with the elder of the two English ladies. Ferdinand and I embraced each other at the station for the last time as happy people.

CHAPTER XX

On arriving at home, I found them all in a state of rejoicing over my sister's engagement to Count Kaiserling, whom we all liked extremely. Carried away by this, I was foolish enough to confide my own engagement to my mother.

Had I announced my intention of murdering the entire family in the most brutal way, it could not have evoked a greater storm of horror and indignation than did the announcement of this event which brought so much happiness to me.

It was the work of a moment for her to rush to my father; to put him in a towering rage; to return with him to my room—both of them furious.

At first I could not understand this sudden and violent attack. I tried to explain to this enraged couple that the man they were attacking so unwarrantably was a world-famed philosopher and scholar, but they gave me no chance of speaking. They used expressions which I would have deemed impossible in people of their birth and education. My father used such insulting language that at last I felt the Viking blood of the "Tönniges" (the old Norse name of my family) rise in my veins. I called out proudly and distinctly, "You can do as you like! I mean to marry Lassalle."

"I would rather shoot you down like a mad dog," my father shouted as he rushed away, putting an end to this terrible scene. After he had left the room, foaming with rage, I wrote the whole story to

Lassalle. The rest of the family went into the dining-room, leaving me alone in my room as a kind of prisoner. I summoned my faithful maid Thérèse, entrusted her with the letter, and bade her deliver it immediately at the *pension* where Lassalle had alighted.

My letter ended with these words:

In any case, I will be as firm as a rock! How I am longing for you, my dearest heart. It is six o'clock, and you, my lord and master, must have arrived. The very thought of this gives me strength, for I need your presence to counteract my weakness.

Thérèse had hardly left, when, looking at the clock, I discovered that Lassalle must be arriving at Geneva at about this moment. I made up my mind and left the house. The servants were busy waiting at table, so I escaped unobserved. When I arrived at the *pension*, he was just alighting from his cab, and looked at me in consternation as I stood before him, pale as death, and in the greatest excitement. He opened the door of a sitting-room, and said to the hotel waiter, "Let no one disturb us."

Thérèse had given him my letter, which he still held unopened in his hand.

I sent Thérèse home, in order that she should not be missed, and as I was in an almost fainting condition, I signed to him to open and read it.

I closed my eyes, and wondered what our next step would be. Then a most unexpected and dreadful thing happened, which was the beginning of all the tragedies which followed. He called out, "*Helene!*"

I looked up, frightened at the unusual tone. "You disobeyed me—you have betrayed everything to your mother against my wishes, and through this have spoiled everything."

He stood before me, pale as death, his blue eyes blazing with anger. When he saw how frightened I was, he grew more gentle and said, "No, no! I will arrange it somehow; but what are we to do next?"

I looked up at him in astonishment and said, "Now that I know my parents to be inexorable, it would be impossible for me to remain with them. Therefore I have come to carry out the plans we made before, and to fly with you abroad to be married."

For one moment he folded me gratefully in his arms, then instead of being delighted with my decision, said, "No, I will not run away now. With whom do your haughty parents think they are dealing? Now, I will only take you from their hands as my bride, and they themselves shall lead us to the altar."

"Ferdinand," I said warningly, "my father will never give his consent—believe me. Let us fly!"

But he shook his head obstinately and said, "His will must give way to mine; he shall learn to feel my power; I shall conjure up heaven and hell against him. You must go back to them."

"Never!" I answered indignantly. "This hour has severed us for ever."

"Very well, then—go to friends. I will ask my friend Countess Hatzfeld to come here immediately, who will take charge of you, and in the meantime I will battle against all your father's prejudices, and shall succeed!"

"Ah! the Countess," I said sadly, for all joy and courage seemed suddenly to have deserted me. "She is one of the chief grievances my father has against you. Even now, a relative is staying with us, a Dr. Arndt, who has been telling my parents dreadful stories about you and the Countess; calling her an immoral woman—even worse; and this has enraged my father more than your politics."

Ferdinand laughed derisively.

"Oh, indeed! Dr. Arndt! His motives are mere petty vengeance; only a few months ago I had him turned out of my 'universal union' for working men on account of his narrow-mindedness and want of tact."

"That is all very well, but papa thinks a great deal of this nephew."

"Very well, then, the Countess must stay at home, and I will ask my mother and sister to come here. Nothing can be said against *them*. They, and friend Holthoff, will take you under their protection."

Holthoff! Good heavens! I just remembered that a letter was lying on my writing-table at home. In the hurry and excitement I had forgotten it. It was still lying there unopened. I told Ferdinand of this, but he hardly seemed to listen, and said:

"Yes, Holthoff must come here; he loves us both and was always favourable to our marriage."

I made one more appeal to him, although I felt it was almost hopeless. I placed my hands on his shoulders, and, looking up at him entreatingly, I said, "Ferdinand, do nothing of all this. Don't send me back. Let us go away together. I am prepared for all. I am your wife, your slave!"

But he remained firm.

Later on, I heard that people had said that these words proved I now became his mistress in the hotel. Good heavens! Our minds were far from erotic thoughts. We hardly thought of our love and passion in those dreadful moments. With him, wounded vanity was in the foreground; with me, sheer despair. Indeed, as an old friend of Lassalle's remarked afterwards when speaking of his extraordinary behaviour on that occasion, "If we had belonged to each other entirely in that fateful hour, neither the family nor fate would ever have succeeded in parting us."

Perhaps!

I believe I have thought more of the part Lassalle played in this hour than of anything that has happened to me during my whole life. I have come to the conclusion that his behaviour was due, not to wounded vanity, arising from my parents' refusal, but from other causes, the knowledge of which I gleaned

from a letter which he wrote to a friend before he left for Rigi Kaltbad, and which ran as follows :—

I am dead tired, and strong as my constitution is, it has been shaken to its very foundations. My excitement is so great that I am unable to sleep at night. I toss about till five o'clock in the morning, when I get up with a bad headache and am utterly exhausted. I am overworked, tired out. The superhuman efforts I made to work out in four months the Bastiat-Schultz affair, the horrible disappointment and annoyance that the apathy and indifference of the working classes caused me, were all too much, even for me. I am playing a *métier de dupe*, and my annoyance is all the greater, because I am not only obliged to suppress it, but to appear sometimes as if the reverse were the case.

This letter testifies to his energy, which was strained to its utmost limits. After only a few weeks of leisure on the Rigi in which to recover from his fatigue, there came all the excitement of our meeting, engagement, and threatened conflict with my family. He, or rather his weakened nervous system, must have been seized with a sort of moral insanity, which made him—usually the strongest-willed being, and one who never hesitated before making great decisions nor made the slightest concession to conventionality—act like the most straight-laced bourgeois. I suddenly remembered the fable he had told me, and called out desperately :

"Don't try to carry the donkey now, it is not the moment to do so."

Just then some one knocked loudly at the door, which flew open, and Thérèse appeared. "For heaven's sake," she almost shouted to us, "fly at once. I have brought a carriage with me. Every one is looking for you at home, and the train starts in a quarter of an hour."

This was the last chance given me by fate.

Ferdinand—whose features had become almost stony—offered me his arm, saying, "Come, I will take you to your friends, and you must stay with them until my mother and Holthoff arrive."

I said nothing more.

Thérèse stood wringing her hands at the carriage door. She knew my parents and what was in store for us.

Broken-hearted, I arrived at my friend's and hardly felt the pressure of Ferdinand's hand, which he rested on mine, whispering words of courage.

My friend received me most kindly. She promised I should see no one but Thérèse, and Lassalle said, quite relieved, "Then you are safe here."

At this moment, Madame R., who was standing at the window, called out, "Your mother is coming." I was terribly frightened, but Lassalle, relying on his power over women, said, "Heaven sends her to us. I will see her and speak to her."

The scene that followed between him and my mother was so terrible that it killed for ever any spark of feeling I might have had left for her.

As soon as she saw us, she exclaimed, "I will not stand this man in my presence! Out with him!" Lassalle approached her with dignity, assured her of his respect for her, and his love for me, and said at last, "For heaven's sake, tell me what you have against me."

She turned her back to him and screamed out, "I owe you no explanation *why*, but my husband will have you banished. You shall be thrown out. Now, out of my sight!"

I was indignant. I approached Lassalle, and, laying my hand upon his arm, said, "Come, let us go; I cannot stand hearing you spoken to like this; no one shall treat you thus in my presence."

He took my hand, and said quietly and politely to mother, "Do as you please, Madam, you are unable to put me out, for always and in all circumstances I can only see in you Helene's mother. I shall not forget this for one moment, nor shall I allow myself to be carried away into saying hasty things."

Instead of calming the excited and enraged woman, it only made her worse, and when Lassalle said that he would go to my father like a sensible man, and arrange everything quietly, she replied rudely, "My husband will not receive you; he will have you turned out by the servants."

"No, he will *not* do that," said Lassalle quietly; "I am not a man whom one 'turns out,' but as I do not wish to humiliate us all by exposing Helene's father to such a temptation, I will write to him."

"He will return your letters unopened."

"If he does that, Madam, even *my* patience will be exhausted; we shall be justified then in helping ourselves, for we shall be forced to do so."

She answered him ironically, "You have done this already; you have led away my daughter to this unheard-of step. She has left her parents' roof and refuses to return. You are a brute, you have stolen my child!"

At this I flared up. "He did not! I went away because I feel I belong to him. You have destroyed the love I had for you, and I never wish to return."

I was terribly excited; my whole being turned against my unkind mother, and towards him whom I now loved madly; but once again he damped my ardour when he said quietly, even smilingly, "Do you really think I have stolen your child, Madam? You shall see how wrong you are! Helene, tell me, Would you do anything I asked you? Would no sacrifice be too great for me? Would you, if I wished it, go away with me—do anything I ask you?"

"Certainly," I answered unhesitatingly, although with an anxious heart. "I will do anything you like; go away with you at once. Ask anything you like of me—anything except return to my own people."

"And it is just *that* which I ask of you! The very greatest sacrifice you could make for my sake. Will you do it? Will you?"

"If you really *can* ask me this, then, Yes! But think what you are doing. I am so frightened—do not send me back to them. I am trembling at the thought."

"You will do it for me," he said firmly. "And now, Madam, I give you your child back again. Listen! I, who could have done with your daughter what I pleased, have returned her to you, although only for a short time. She is only going with you because I wish it. Never forget that—and now, farewell." He turned to me and said, "Adieu for a short time. I will never forget what you are doing for me now in returning to your parents, and can never thank you enough. I ask nothing more of your will and strength. I know this is sufficient—all else will be my care. Do not allow yourself to be ill-treated, but do what they ask of you. I shall know everything they do to you, and shall fetch you away at the slightest injustice. Remember this, and do not be unhappy. They shall not keep you long. Conform patiently for a short time to their will; mine is the stronger; we shall win—and now, once again, adieu for a short time."

He kissed my mouth and hands passionately many times, and then left.

It was the last time I ever beheld him. He had hardly left, when my mother poured a volley of invective on me, in the midst of which my father entered, brandishing an old rifle and exclaiming, "Where is this insubordinate daughter? Let me kill her."

My friend tried to pacify him, but he seized me by the hair, which I wore in flowing curls, and dragged me across the street into our house. Here my window and door were nailed up, and I remained a prisoner.

Later, when the volume of Lassalle's *Intimate Letters* fell into my hands, I think I found another and perhaps the truest clue to his unaccountable

behaviour at this time. No doubt his wounded pride and vanity, and the weak state of his nerves, had something to do with it all, but he, like most Jews, had a most exalted love and respect for his parents, and imagined that in the end he could conciliate mine. Like many other great men, he was often as naive as a child.

He overlooked the difference in character of our two families, also my father's haughty love of position, which he considered would be endangered by his daughter's marriage with Lassalle, the man of the people. He regarded everything through the medium of his own love for his parents, and his soul could conceive no lesser love existing between parent and child in any station of life. This sentiment was clearly shown in many of his letters, and particularly in the following one addressed to his sister :—

Dear Sister—As you know, my much-loved parents were with me about a fortnight. You can easily imagine how happy their visit made me, but I was terribly anxious and upset at hearing of all my father's troubles. It is a fearful thing that he and my dear mother should be suddenly plunged into poverty —almost need—after their long and industrious life.

I believe that my father has not told me all, in order to spare me anxiety, as, alas! I am unable to help them. All I beg of you, dear sister, is to arrange matters amicably with my mother, and not to allow family dissensions to add to my father's burdens.

Remember that people in unhappy circumstances demand more tenderness than when they are in the full flood of success. I can't tell you how unhappy it makes me not to be able to help them. Young as I am, I have had a most varied life; I have not only been successful in a case brought against me for high treason, but on two occasions I defied imprisonment in non-political lawsuits. I have suffered much injustice and unhappiness — seen my highest hopes dissolve in air; but assure you that nothing has ever distressed me so much as to see the unfortunate position to which my parents are reduced and to be unable to help them.

I have other ties. The affair of the Countess which I undertook—being mixed up with political affairs—was at its most critical point during the revolution of 1848, and is now in

a state of collapse. In these circumstances I am in honour bound not to desert her. The captain is the last person who should leave a sinking ship, and even if this were not the case, what real good could I be to my parents? The present moment is not one in which mind and intelligence can be turned to any real profit. If you and your husband could take care of them, I would look upon it as a personal benefit, which I would strive to repay you all my life. Although I am unable to help them now, we are all of us still young, and later it is quite possible that I may be in a position to repay you tenfold for anything you may do for them now. My life is the best proof that my word can be relied on, for I have just gone through four years of anxiety and danger to keep a promise given. Nothing would hurt me more than if you did not do your duty towards them now.—Your loving brother, FERDINAND.

DÜSSELDORF, *2nd May* 1850.

As I understand him now since the perusal of this letter, he, wishing to become a son to my father, could not act otherwise. As his filial love had softened his own father's heart towards him at a critical moment, he came to the mistaken conclusion that his generosity in returning me to my mother would soften my father's heart towards him.

When one remembers how Ferdinand's father opposed his studies, his filial love becomes all the more touching.

I forgot to relate what Ferdinand told me about the difficulties he experienced from the opposition of his family, which he only overcame by the greatest efforts. His father wished him to go into a banking business, and placed him in the School of Commerce at Leipzig, from which he ran away, and returned home without his father's knowledge. His mother and sister hid him in a little room under the roof and brought him his food there. He never left this room for months, and studied day and night, until he went to one of the Professors in Breslau to be examined. He passed this examination so brilliantly, that he went with the certificate to his father, who then consented to allow him to study at the Berlin

University. He was then sixteen years of age. In spite of his father's undue severity, Lassalle's intimate letters, even those written during his student days, breathed the greatest devotion to his parents, and both he and I made the mistake of judging all the people mixed up in our story by our own standard.

CHAPTER XXI

I WAS a prisoner—and a changed being. From that moment I was a child no longer, and all sensation seemed dead within me. The dreadful shocks to my nerves, the final catastrophe, Lassalle's requesting me to return to my parents instead of running away with me, and my father's attitude (I was alienated for ever from my mother since her insulting behaviour to Lassalle), all combined to produce a kind of apathy and incapacity of feeling.

Everything seemed incomprehensible to me. How was it possible for all those who professed to love me but a short time ago suddenly to treat me as they did now? I sat and brooded in the dark, my thoughts going round and round in a circle. For how many days, I know not!

The next morning, after my first entirely sleepless night, my father appeared and handed me Holthoff's letter, which he had opened, saying, "Here, read—you can see for yourself what your good friend thinks of your disgraceful behaviour with that rascal Lassalle." He then left me. I read the letter upon which Ferdinand and I had built so many hopes. It was the answer to my letter written at Wabern. He advised me in heaven's name to do nothing against the wishes of my parents. Lassalle was not a fit husband for any girl of good family! This was Lassalle's best friend! The one on whom he counted and trusted implicitly—*my* best friend!

If we had him against us, to whom should we turn

for help? Oh, if I had only been able to show this horrible letter to Lassalle yesterday, he would at least know what to expect from his friend. I heard later, as soon as he had received my letter, Holthoff went to my uncle in Berlin, talked the matter over with him, and then wrote to me in the manner described. My uncle had assured him that my family would never consent to this insane marriage!

So Holthoff made up his mind to become a turncoat.

The words of Ulrich von Hütten out of Lassalle's "Franz von Sickingen" ran sadly through my brain:

> "Sieh! Herr, von Freunden das erfahren müssen,
> Denen man stets mit willigem Gemüt
> Und freier Liebe hingegeben war, das schmerzt hart!"

The dreadful hours and days that followed were only varied by the entrance of my father, who came to ask me if I thought better of it all, or if I still intended being the cause of his losing his position, and of bringing all my family into disgrace. To this I always gave the same answer, "I am going to marry Lassalle." Then I sat in the dark alone.

They then had recourse to other measures. They sent my younger brothers to me (I was very fond of one of them). They were instructed to tell me that I should entirely ruin their careers if I persisted in marrying this dreadful "revolutionist." My apathy made me insensible to their attacks, and I was absolutely indifferent to all the dramatic scenes, and the weepings and wailings of my mother.

To-day, as then in my loneliness, I ask myself what could have been the precise reason for all this exhibition of malicious anger at the idea of my marriage with Lassalle? I have never been able to find any satisfactory answer. I presume that my cousin Dr. Arndt was at the bottom of it all. Lassalle had not taken enough notice of his threatening words, "I will remember this," when he turned him out of

the Workmen's Union, and now this mole was busy underground digging a pit wherein to trap the lion.

One night I heard a gentle scratching at my door, like one of the dogs I was so fond of. It was no dog, but my faithful Thérèse.

She whispered through the closed door, "I am only able to come to you because every one is asleep. All intercourse is forbidden, *gnädiges Fräulein*, and his Excellency says that any one leaving the house will be shot. I felt I must let you know that Herr Lassalle has left Geneva. I know it for certain. What is to be done now?"

The news came upon me like a thunderbolt! "For heaven's sake, Thérèse, go and find out all you can, and come and tell me at night."

She then stole away, and I was alone in my despair.

Ferdinand had left Geneva and deserted me! The words echoed through my soul again and again, and my heart became tortured by doubts.

"Has he given me up? And has Holthoff persuaded him of the impossibility of his undertaking? My God! My God! What shall I do? What shall I believe?"

I suddenly realised how little we really knew each other. He perhaps knew me, as it was easy to fathom "the child,"—but I him! I had only seen him those few months in Berlin, and then in the short glorious days at Wabern. What had I not heard of his love episodes? Perhaps I was only one of these. Perhaps it was not worth his while to fight such a hard battle for "the child!" I have never felt myself so small and worthless as on that dreadful night. No further news reached me. I heard and saw no more of Thérèse.

My blood boils within me when I remember how abominably we both were treated. My father kept back all Lassalle's letters, while Lassalle was under the

impression that they all reached me. On reading his letters to Holthoff, published in the *Sorrows of Lassalle*, I realised what underhand methods were used in order to deceive me (the weaker) and to drive him (the stronger) to extreme measures.

The morning following the terrible night when Thérèse had brought me the news of his departure, my father entered the room and exclaimed in a triumphant voice, "So, now you are free! Your miserable lover has deserted you. No doubt he was afraid of me, for I have summoned the authorities to my aid, and soldiers are now in the house and garden. As Ambassador this is easy for me. The coward has thought wiser to fly."

My heart bled at every sentence uttered.

"How do you know this?" I asked tremblingly.

"I know everything he does," was the reply, "but I hear from Holthoff that he has persuaded Lassalle to give up the whole affair."

I was again left alone, and in my humiliation and anguish the following questions arose in my mind:—

"What can you be worth yourself, if no one seems to give your happiness a pitying thought? If Ferdinand can give you up so easily after you have made such a sacrifice as to return to your parents, trusting entirely to his guidance and strength, then give *yourself* up, sacrifice your happiness and everything else, for you are not worth it."

Next morning, when the usual question was asked me, my despicable weakness gained the upper hand and I gave in. I uttered the fateful words, "Very well, I give it up. I renounce Lassalle in order that all of you may be happy."

The whole family rejoiced at this, but I stood by perfectly apathetic.

It is impossible to describe my condition. In my father's eyes I was transformed from a hellish creature into an ideal daughter, but his praises left me as indifferent as did his curses. It was only at this crisis

that they suddenly noticed how ill and wretched I looked, and summoned a doctor. He examined me in the presence of my mother, as they were afraid of leaving me alone with any one; they surmised, and correctly, that I would have grasped any chance and trusted myself to any stranger who would help me to escape. Any one would have understood me better than my own people. The doctor diagnosed great nervous depression, and advised change of air.

The idea was welcomed by the whole family, and that very evening I was transported to the other side of the lake. This journey has always appeared to me ridiculous. They feared that which I secretly hoped, namely that Lassalle or some of his companions would carry me off by force. If they had only done so!

However, nothing happened. I was taken in pitch darkness, wrapped up in countless shawls and veils, to a boat manned by gendarmes, and rowed with the greatest precaution across the lake, accompanied by my sister's fiancé, Count Kaiserling. I was quite indifferent as to the length of the journey, or where I landed.

My family awaited us in Bex, and it was only on arrival there that I realised that Lassalle had lost another opportunity. I was still with my dreadful parents!

Nevertheless, I hoped against hope. I fancied every workman I passed in a blue blouse might be a messenger from Lassalle bringing me a sign of life. Then again I lost heart, and in the many weary hours that ensued my doubts returned, and I felt sure he had deserted me.

CHAPTER XXII

THINGS were thus in our household, and with me, when one day—when I was sitting at the window in my customary pitiful condition—I saw three people coming towards the hotel; my father, Dr. Arndt, and Yanko! So my father had sent Dr. Arndt to Berlin to fetch him! The sight of him aroused deep feelings of compassion within me.

A moment later he was at my feet.

"Will you take me?" he sobbed.

"*You?*" I exclaimed, horrified. "I wrote to you from Wabern telling you whom I wanted. Nothing is changed since then. My wish is to marry Ferdinand Lassalle."

He told me later that I looked almost uncanny—deathly white, in a long black dress, as if in mourning for my happiness. He kissed my icy cold hands, and tried to console me, and I felt once more that he was my only friend, and one who would protect me against my wretched parents.

The next moment he said, "I won't let them worry you any more, and will protect you as I promised grandmamma."

Then for the first time tears came to my relief.

He continued to tell me that shortly before his departure from Berlin, after Dr. Arndt had told him everything they had been doing to me, he had sworn to sacrifice all for my happiness, even to giving me up to Lassalle, but to throw dust in my parents' eyes, he suggested my openly announcing my engagement to himself.

I shook my head.

"But do you not see, beloved, that this is the only plan that can save you? It is only in such circumstances that they would trust you to me," and here he burst into sobs. "I am, and must be, your faithful Moorish page."

We mingled our tears, but our heavy hearts saw no gleam of light in the future.

I replied, "I must tell you in spite of your being so good and noble, that the day I see Lassalle, nothing will part me from him again, even if to reach him I had to step over all your corpses—yours included. This is the truth, and I have never lied to you."

Maybe these words, uttered passionately, and revealing the depths of my feeling for the first time to him, caused him to pause a moment. Then he put his arms round me and said gently, "Even then you would still find me at my post taking care of you." After this, he went to tell my parents I had accepted his proposal.

At this period matters came to a standstill. It seemed as if fate was taking breath, in order to crush us more completely. I heard nothing more from any one, but received a short letter from Holthoff in which he exhorted me "to be a good, dutiful daughter, as only then could my friends return to me with love and respect."

What I had done to lose them—in fact, what I had done to all these people—is still an enigma to me.

How could Holthoff write like this to me when at the very time he was receiving the most heart-rending letters from Lassalle—letters that would have moved a stone?

I must quote certain of these letters, for they alone can give an adequate idea of Lassalle's sufferings, which were even greater than mine.

Oh, if my false friend Holthoff had only then sent

me one line to let me know what my lover was going through, how very, very different everything might have been.

The first letter ran as follows:—

DEAR FRIEND—Why did I not follow your advice and elope with Helene before her parents knew I was there?

It would have been so easy when we were at Berne; but Helene wished to try and conciliate her parents before taking drastic measures. This appealed to my loyalty and I gave in.

This is my reward! On my arrival here yesterday I found everything in a turmoil. Helene—who had arrived a few hours before me—had told everything, and her father was absolutely furious. The mother might have relented, but he prevented this. I will pass over their disgraceful behaviour to myself; I only saw the mother for a few moments at a friend's. I have not seen the father at all, but he sent two of his relatives to me with the most absurd threats. Their behaviour to Helene is simply disgraceful. She is locked up, no one is allowed to enter her room, and she is utterly wretched. However, she is as determined as I am, and I am resolved at all costs not to give way. This affair may end badly, as nothing will induce me now to retrace my steps. The only person who can avert a real catastrophe, and perhaps bring matters to a happy conclusion, is yourself. Will you come here for Helene's and my sake? Telegraph your reply, if you will.—Your half-demented,

F. LASSALLE.

GENEVA, *Aug.* 4.

In this letter, he begins to see how foolishly he acted in giving me back to my parents, but he was still hopeful in spite of his presentiments of misfortune, and trusted in the loyalty of his friend. What foolish creatures we both were, and how blind we had been!

A proof of Lassalle's foolishness was that during these miserable days he wrote a desperate letter to the Countess, full of his love for another woman, and bewailing her loss. Oh! incomparable blindness! Could he not guess that this would enrage his friend against that other woman? Also that it would hasten on the tragedy?

Part of the letter ran as follows:—

Although I have fought with myself during twenty-four hours, I now give in, and come to pour out my sorrows on the bosom of my best and dearest friend. I am so unhappy that for the first time for fifteen years I am crying. My criminal stupidity is now my martyrdom. I am so utterly broken that I feel justified in begging you to come here and comfort me. You are the only being in the world able to understand what it really means for my fortitude to give way absolutely. What has come to me? I, the universal adviser and helper, to be thus begging for advice and help! My conscience upbraids me, and I am resolved to make up for my stupidity at all costs. Should I not be successful in this matter—and I have my doubts—I shall be destroyed.

His second letter to Holthoff is still more heart-rending. The first time I read it, and even when I read it now, I am overcome by the thought that Lassalle's self-reproach, which grew stronger and stronger, always turned on the fact that he had delivered me—so weak and easily influenced—to the unyielding will of my father.

It really seems as if some supernatural being had placed a veil of blindness over every one of us, for not one person taking part in our tragedy seems to have been able to see clearly. Each person seems to have done the wrong thing. It ran:

Dear and faithful Friend—I have scarcely the necessary self-control to give you a clearer report than my letter of yesterday. It is impossible to describe my state of mind. It is an appalling thing to confess, but I am not ashamed to own that I have wept a great deal during the past few days. The ever-recurring thought, and one which drives me almost to desperation, is, that it is all my own fault. I had the bird in my hand for a whole week; and could have flown with her to Italy and by this time we should have been man and wife, but she wrote to me so touchingly and nobly at Rigi Kaltbad (I will show you her letter), begging me to try all amicable means before resorting to extremes. In fact, this was one of her conditions. When I got to Berne, I made other suggestions, but she was still so hopeful of gaining our point in the usual conventional way, and the most she feared was a few altercations, therefore I had not the heart to over-persuade her. *Tu Dieu!* If I had insisted (here all the Laocoön serpents sting me),

she would have followed me to Italy without the slightest hesitation. But I wished to spare her all self-reproach; she was so certain of success, that if I had eloped with her, she might have always fancied we should have managed the other way after all. I hardly knew what to reply when she said to me, "Let us begin in my way; if it fails, we can always resort to other measures." Then, to tell the truth, I did not know—before our present separation—*how* dearly I loved Helene! Until then, I took my lightly-won joy very calmly, was quite pleased at the idea of getting married, but had no idea what deep root this love had taken. No lion has ever lashed himself into such fury as I when I think of my arrant folly.

Enough of this. The present situation is as follows:—

I have not been able to see the father at all. Helene's premature confession to her mother made this impossible. Helene is kept a prisoner. I was on the point of appealing to the authorities about it, when I heard that she had been taken away from here secretly—they say to a brother-in-law at Culm.

During the moments I saw her yesterday, she mentioned that this was one of her father's plans.

Last night, her father sent two of his relations to me, who told me Helene was gone. This may only be a trap, but since then my inquiries have elicited contradictory reports. And although I have had the house surrounded by spies, I have not been able to get definite information. No letter of mine could reach her, and she is unable to communicate with me. The only word I have received from her is a letter that was handed me on my arrival. The father seems to rule the household with a rod of iron, and the flood-gates of his wrath are opened on me. I was idiot enough to meet him straightforwardly,—hence his victory, and my most deserved defeat.

In these circumstances, it may be days before I find out where she is. What I most fear is, that in time they will succeed in bending her to their wishes—her will is so weak and vacillating. The letter she wrote me after the great altercation with her father was full of determination (you shall read it in Berlin), but I fear this will not last if she hears nothing more from me.

What is to be done now? I don't know!

Of one thing, however, I am convinced, namely, I *must* have Helene! Workmen's Unions, politics, science, prison—all else pales before the one thought of how to regain her. Can you suggest a way? Can you undo a fool's work? If you can do anything for me, Holthoff, I will thank you on my knees. Remember by all that is holy, that you must be entirely on

my side. I am fighting for a woman who loves me madly, and whom I adore more than she loves me. I don't mind what sacrifices I make, or how long I have to wait, and would win her even by committing a crime. I am indescribably unhappy, dear Holthoff. When a nature as strong as mine loses all self-control, it is thrice wretched. I weep whilst I write. I am losing all pride, all faith in myself, and am like a broken reed. I beg you to write to me immediately:

1st. What you will do to help me gain the father's consent.

2nd. How you will help me in other ways.

3rd. Find out where she is!

If we could be together once more—if only for two hours—I would fly to Caprera, where Garibaldi's chaplain would marry us at once, even without papers, which would make matters irrevocable.

Fool that I have been!

Write—where to I hardly know, as my movements depend on the news I receive.

Write to Basle—*poste restante*, for I may be going to Carlsruhe on the 15th of August, in connection with Helene's affairs. I can think of nothing else. I could fetch your letter there, or get it sent on to me. Good-bye Holthoff! I am desperately miserable—a thing no one has ever heard me say yet! Sympathise with me.—Your F. L.

P.S.—If you should happen to discover her address and write to her, do enclose this letter; it will help her to know all that is in my heart.

It is strange that Holthoff seems to have made no reply to these first three letters, which breathed the anguish of a wounded heart, for the following, which was the third one he wrote to his "dearest friend," received no reply, nor were any of the telegrams which he begs for so persistently ever sent.

Dear Friend—The only satisfaction is to write to you, for you are the only one who can help me.

You can have no conception of my state of despair. Three days ago I would have laughed at any one who would have told me that I should love Helene as I do. She is my only thought, and to weep is my only consolation. Although I am a stranger here, I have managed to place a cordon of spies round the house, who are watching night and day. Their reports all tally in saying she is still here.

One ray of hope at least!

Herr von Dönniges was ridiculous enough to threaten me with banishment, whilst I have requisitioned the police. Thank heaven, there is a Radical Government, and a prominent official has promised me news to-morrow. If I get it, and it is reliable, I intend appealing through a lawyer to the President, in order to set Helene free.

No one would recognise me, for passion has conquered my reason. I often feel inclined to kill Herr von Dönniges, to break into his house armed; then reason comes to the fore, and shows me how absurdly my imagination is running away with me.

If Helene is still here, things can be remedied. I shall leave the place, and then her imprisonment would be at an end, and the task of bringing her to me would be carried out by my friends. The question is—Is she still there? Friend, dear friend! can you not help me? Do come. You can tell Herr von Dönniges that it is dangerous to drive me to extremes, for I should certainly be an *ennemi terrible.*

I intend to stop at nothing—and will risk my life to regain the woman I lost through my incredible stupidity. If you can think of any way of helping us, my whole life is at your service; it should be yours at any moment.—Your

F. L.

P.S.—You will scarcely be able to influence by letter, but you might by speaking to him. Is it possible for you to come? If so, let me hear by two telegrams—one addressed here to Geneva, Pension Beauvais; the other to Basle, Bureau télégraphique—*post restante.*

Friday night, 10 o'c.

Saturday morning early—

The various complications nearly drive me mad! In my normal condition I could get her back, even if her father hid her in the moon; but I am so pulled down by the last six months, that I feel incapable of fighting. I fear Helene's character will not be strong enough to resist the pressure put upon it, but apart from that, think of her sufferings! I am in such despair, I don't know what to do. All day long I hear the sweet trembling voice in which Helene uttered her last words to me. If you see the remotest chance of helping us—do so, no matter what sacrifice it would cost you to leave Berlin. I implore you to do it! I know it is needless to impress upon you the necessity of silence.—Your F. L.

It seems as if Holthoff deigned to answer at last. This I gather from Ferdinand's fourth letter, of which I only give a short extract, as it deals with persons and things of a private nature, and mentions people on whom Ferdinand had vainly pinned his hopes.

Dear Holthoff—I have just received your letter of the 7th. If I had to judge you by it, you would never hear from me again. The only sensible remark in it is, that it is impossible to retract. The advice you wrote to Helene at Berne, telling her not to hurry matters, was the very worst you could have given. Unfortunately, we acted in this way when the only wise thing would have been to carry Helene off to Italy from Berne, and make her my wife. The fact of our *not* having hurried means the wreckage of my life. I could manage if I could only get one letter to reach Helene, but she is so closely watched that, up to now, this has been impossible.

I, who have always managed to correspond as I pleased, in workhouses and prisons, have not yet been able in eight days to get a single note to reach her. Even visitors are not allowed to see her. It is reported that she has left.

On Thursday morning Herr N. told me, on his word of honour, that she had left that morning—and Saturday evening I was able to see her with my own eyes and to exchange greetings.

Nevertheless they continue to tell every one that she is gone. They now say she is at some watering-place in the north; before that they said she was with relations at Culm. It is possible, perhaps, that she did leave on Saturday evening, but certain indications seem to prove that she is here still.

You see, dear friend, nothing remains for me but to dash my head against a wall. This time, you may be sure, it will be either the head or the wall that will break. Since last evening, I feel strangely apathetic and quiet, although yesterday I broke down under the weight of my sorrow. To-day, again, I am firm as iron, and the strength of my will has returned. I now intend playing this game to the end with all the imperturbability of a chess player.

I have sworn to myself that the day I realise that Helene is lost to me for ever, I will put a bullet through my head. I have also sworn this to my friends, who all know I am in bitter earnest. This thought has restored my equilibrium.

I have looked back on my life, and find that it has been big, brave, and brilliant enough. A future age will know how

to do me justice; and I shall either marry Helene or cease to exist. In either case, I shall have ceased to suffer. Anyway there is nothing to lose. The thought of this calms me and restores my strength.

I shall not be able to spare much time in trying to win Helene. I have neither time nor wish to defend myself in Berlin against criminal lawsuits. Neither can I spare time to go to gaol for six weeks, for in the meantime I might lose her. True, I might find bail in Berlin, but that would not be of much use to me, for, until I have won Helene, I feel quite unable to meet the demands that are crowding on me from all sides.

Until then, I can think of nothing else; I am not made to play the fool, of whom much is expected, but who falls short of the mark.

I am not one who can patiently wait the development of events.

Although I am no longer young, I feel that I could fight months and years to gain her—if every day only brought some definite plan I could work at for this end.

The day that my resources are exhausted, I shall cease to interest myself in the matter. To suspend it and work in the meantime at other things would be an impossibility to me.

Therefore most probably it will be settled in October one way or another. The thought of this is a wonderful relief to me. The game will be brief and fierce.

My plan is as follows, and I know that in any circumstances you are incapable of betraying it. The day after to-morrow I am going to Carlsruhe to meet friends, and to move heaven and earth to induce the King of Bavaria to intercede for me with her father. You will smile at this romantic project, and I myself must laugh at it. But where all ordinary means fail, romantic ones step in.

During my absence all arrangements will be made and will appear as if I had not left. You, of course, will show nobody this letter, and I will strive to get into touch with her. A letter from her would settle everything.

Let us hope that this could be more easily effected in my absence. If both plans fall through, then I shall return there from Munich, in order to play the last and tragic act in the drama.

It is just possible, but not very probable, that I might return to Berlin first, and see whether any other resources are available before resorting to extreme and decisive measures. It may be that we shall never meet again.

Ominous words! Like so many others in Lassalle's desperate letters, they seem to breathe the presentiment of his death! They make one shudder!

If she be elsewhere, and I find out where, a ray of hope will re-enter my heart; I should have preferred her, of course, to be here; but no matter where she be, I have enthusiastic friends throughout Germany, Belgium, and France ready to help me. I have managed to get together in a very short time more excellent means of help than I should have been able to collect during weeks in other cities. She could never have been imprisoned and treated as she is by her despotic parents anywhere else. In fact, being of age, no other parents would dare to behave as they do—it is criminal!

I have already been promised assistance by the most prominent member of the local Government here, and the Procurateur Général is prepared to enter the house by force, and set her free, if necessary.

We are not yet agreed as to the best way I can manage to be present at this forcible *visite domiciliaire*, and without my presence I should not care for it to take place.

If I were not there, she would be under the influence of her parents, and she would never give a free answer to the questions put to her by the Procurateur Général as to whether she wishes to quit her parents' home, whether she is there by her own free will, or under pressure, whereas my presence would give her courage.

We dare not risk the failure of this plan, as this would augment ill-feeling. I therefore prefer to give it up!

In this fourth letter he speaks of yet another plan, namely, to try and induce Geheimrat von Boeckh to intercede with my father. Lassalle fancied this plan might be of great assistance. Above all, he wanted Holthoff to write to my mother, and Boeckh to my father, to inform them exactly who Lassalle was.

The misrepresentations of Dr. Arndt and others led Herr von Dönniges to believe that Lassalle was a mere adventurer—a sort of spy of Bismarck, nay, even a criminal who had been in gaol on various occasions; whereas the only sentences passed against

him were for political speeches and publications in the press.

It seems that, in response to this request, Holthoff did not write to my mother, but communicated with Boeckh. This letter, which possesses a certain interest as bearing on the subsequent catastrophe, may or may not have been seen by my father.

Holthoff's double game seems to me incomprehensible, for while seeming to act in accordance with Lassalle's wishes, he was doing his best to malign him to my people.

Before quoting Boeckh's letter, I should like to mention that the Gneist who is spoken of was the famous barrister, Dr. Rudolph Gneist, Boeckh's son-in-law—my father's most intimate college friend—and my godfather. I do not know what part he played in the whole tragedy, nor anything about the papers in question.

Boeckh's letter was as follows :—

Dear Sir—In transmitting you herewith the papers received from Gneist, I am in somewhat of a dilemma. I have been requested to write to Herr von Dönniges and express an opinion upon a family matter regarding Dr. Lassalle. I consider that the interference of a stranger, or even of a friend, in family matters, is always more or less a doubtful proceeding. If I were to take any step which might be construed as interference on my part, Herr von Dönniges would be quite justified in resenting it.

But there is no reason why I should not express my opinion of Herr Lassalle to you quite freely, and at the same time allow you to make what use of it you may think fit.

I have known Lassalle for many years, and our acquaintance became more intimate through Alexander von Humboldt, who had a great opinion of him, and who strove to protect him against various attacks. I consider Herr Lassalle a most eminent man, possessed of varied and deep knowledge of most subjects, of remarkable penetration and judgment, and with an unusual power of expression.

As regards his political work, I feel sure he acts absolutely in accordance with his own deep convictions, that he is nobody's tool, but pursues his aim with entire independence of feeling,

fearing no sacrifices, and braving every kind of danger. He has been reproached by cautious people for holding too rigidly upon his own course, without looking to the right or the left.

He has many pleasing characteristics, and I confess that I was always attracted by his animated and spirited conversation.

Let these remarks suffice both to you and Herr Lassalle, who is already fully aware of my opinion of him, and my attitude of mind towards him, as I have both written and spoken to him in a similar sense.—Believe me, dear sir, etc.,

A. Boeckh.

Berlin, 23*rd August* 1861.

I give another letter of Lassalle's, written in a despairing mood, after my enforced departure from Geneva to Bex. He was as desperate at not knowing my whereabouts as I was concerning him, when I was informed that he had left Geneva, and when, believing these false reports, I acted with such miserable weakness.

Dear Friend—If there is an atom of love or interest in your heart for me; if one spark of pity glows there, you can never be so stony, so inhuman, as to refuse my request. I had hardly despatched my long letter to you of this morning, and here I am again writing to you this evening, in floods of tears! My seeming calm of this morning broke down under terrible news. My sufferings are indescribable. I hardly know if it would not be better to throw myself into the lake, and thus end these weeks of torment which have proved fruitless after all.

You know me, dear Holthoff, you know that I am a man; but where has my courage departed to? I suffer so hideously; this agony would be sufficient to atone for a murder.

I am in despair. It is strange that I, who in the face of the greatest obstacles always entertain the wildest hopes of success, and feel myself only elated by them, should have—from the beginning of this catastrophe—seen only the dark side, and felt myself powerless to act.

I am Lassalle no longer—not even his shadow. I am doomed to sink. I know it! I am howling for Helene as a lioness robbed of her cubs. I feel annihilated, crushed, thrice broken.

If any one had told me that I—at my age—should be seized by such a wonderful passion which exceeds the rhapsodies of the wildest poets, I should have scoffed at him! Let us get to

the point. My terrible state of mind is owing to news that reached me three hours ago.

A new man-servant, who three days ago, on Monday last, entered the Dönniges' household, has been won over to our side, and states that Helene is not at home—she left last Sunday.

My blood froze when I heard the news, and I could hardly drag myself home.

Gone! And I know not where! What misery lies in this word "gone"! Here she is of age; in other places still a minor.

I have succeeded in bringing here my most shrewd and cautious friend, who cannot come to Germany. I have engaged the very best lawyer here, etc. etc. All these are mere details.

But gone—and not to know where; that is like a thunderbolt! This maims and crushes one like lightning. How long must I wander seeking on the face of the earth? I quiver to the very centre of my being when I think of the heartrending misery I shall still have to endure. These last days have taught me what pain means, and what cowards pain can make of us.

I ask you two things, Holthoff, and if you refuse me, then you have less humanity in you than a stone.

Here followed a foolish request regarding my relations, etc., the gratifying of which would have done no good.

Mercy! dear Holthoff, write to me at once; it would be base of you to lose a day. It is possible that the news I heard may be false, but this time I fear it is true, as there are several indications of this.

What a terrible existence I have evoked by my loyalty and consideration. If I had only thought of myself, Helene would to-day be my wedded wife. And now I must roam through Europe in order to trace her. The bare idea of this must drive one mad. In your letter you ask, "Am I sure of Helene?" Oh, dear friend, you have no idea of the proofs of love she has given me, and yet she is too weak of will to allow one to feel sure of her.

She is not created for struggles—she is too soft and yielding.

If she could give me up (Hell lies in the very thought), I could not even console myself with the thought that she was not worthy of me. I love her far too madly to be able to console myself with abstractions. Is it not a proof of her

weakness that I have not even received a line—a word from her? Can she be so helpless as to be unable to send me even a line? And supposing she is so timid, and allows herself to be coerced, what would happen in weeks—months hence? Will she not become absolutely crushed? If she gives me up—oh! the thought poisons my blood.

Write at once. I am inexpressibly miserable.—Your

F. L.

Yes, she *was* as helpless as that, and it is a wonder to me that his spies and friends did not testify to this.

His last letter, written to Holthoff from Geneva, which I will quote later, seems to breathe such unhappiness and presentiment of death, that no heart capable of feeling pity could remain unmoved by it; mine is wrung by it even to-day. How well he foresaw all that would happen to me, "the terrible consequences to Helene."

He begged for a delay of three months, and, useless as the idea may seem, his reason was to gain time, and to deliver me from the clutches of my persecutors. Even if I had not given way to the wishes of my family, I could never have survived those three months in the state of weakness and ill-health I was then in.

This last letter to Holthoff ran thus:

The news I have just received is far, far worse than any I have had before. I thought I was in despair yesterday, but it is only to-day that I know what despair really means. Listen! Every one has gone—the father, the mother, the sister, and Helene. Only the children are at home. The father left on Sunday with her and her sister. The mother stayed behind.

The Wallachian—whom Helene had refused in Wabern—arrived here last night by the last train. I suppose he came because of this, or because the family telegraphed to him. The mother left with him this morning at seven. Everything seems to point to the fact that somewhere or other they mean to marry Helene to this Wallachian, whom I shall then kill in a duel, or, if he refuse my challenge, shall shoot down in the street like a mad dog.

In these altered circumstances, I beg you, Holthoff, to do

me a service. Write to the father; demand in her name and in mine only *one* concession, namely to grant us three months' delay, during which time he will not force Helene to marry, and give us a chance of winning his consent. Represent to him that, if he persists in hurrying matters, tragedy, and even crime, may be the result. I would kill the man, and fly with her to America. I only want him to give me three months. If by that time I have not gained his consent, he can do as he likes. Everything is gained if he will only give me these three months. I shall find means to persuade the King of Bavaria not only to intercede for me, but to issue a positive command to him to give her to me in marriage. There are men enough in the nation who would do everything possible to save me, if they knew that I risk my all in this affair.

The King could be persuaded, but for this I must have these miserable three months' respite.

Write to him in this sense, make it clear to him that the delay is only needed in order to gain his consent; represent to him the awful consequences his refusal may have for his daughter.

If he grants my request, he will gain time himself and avoid a hasty act which might bring endless trouble upon his family. I will persuade the King. If all is well, I hope to be in Munich before a week is out.

If you or Boeckh can give me letters for Munich which may be useful for my purpose — all the better! Don't lose a moment in writing to Herr von Dönniges! Life and Death may depend on an hour.

Answer to Carlsruhe—*poste restante.* I am going there to-morrow.—Your desperate

F. L.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE most disastrous thing Lassalle could do, now followed; he left Geneva; left me, broke up all his plans and undertakings; plans which, in his eyes—so blinded by despair—seemed practical enough, yet which reacted so fearfully upon me on account of his absence, that they were the immediate cause of the collapse of everything.

Now "friends" in his camp, and the family in mine, had a free hand.

Even Yanko's zeal cooled when he heard that the "beloved had deserted me." He began to make fun of him, and to speak slightingly of his love. He said, "The man you love, who has in his hands the proof of your love, is a coward; he throws you over and runs away; but I, whom you deserted and thrust aside, hasten to you, and put myself and my love at your feet."

And I, ignorant of all that Lassalle was doing for us, could only weep and be silent.

One thing astonished me; I had renounced my happiness—was so severely punished for my weakness, and had done that which, according to my parents, was the right course to adopt in the eyes of the world, yet on every occasion I was made to feel that the "world" ostracised me, and made me responsible for the scandal which had been created in the first instance by my father's senseless conduct in dragging me, with loud curses, across the quiet street, to imprisonment in his own house. His demand to

the Swiss authorities in his capacity as Ambassador to be supplied with police and soldiers to guard his daughter against her lover; my secret transportation over the lake at midnight in the gendarmes' boat; and the various tragic events that followed, were the real cause of it all.

I was made to suffer for it.

My sensitive nature noticed how in our "circle," for whom the sacrifice had been made, many a hand now clasped mine less warmly—many a door was held but half open that formerly was left wide open to me in heartiest welcome. I was indifferent to it all in my suffering, and then, as now, regarded it all with mixed feelings of compassion and contempt.

Fragments of other letters from Lassalle to me still exist; protestations of love, appeals for help, imploring me to be true and firm—advice, threats, but as none of these ever reached me they were unavailing.

I will quote some of these, but do not think he would ever have written as he did, if he had not been influenced by the Countess's friends, who appeared in Geneva with her, and above all, by the "good Countess" herself.

He writes:

My sufferings are beyond description! You have made me unspeakably wretched; the mad love I now give you makes all former love pale. I love you to distraction since last Wednesday night.

Be courageous; I am always near, even when we are parted. If you remain true to me, no power on earth shall succeed in tearing us asunder—I think and do nothing that is not for you. Triumph! My love for you surpasses everything that poetry and legend have ever said of love. Remain firm, *et je me charge du reste.*

"It is impossible," he writes among other things on the 10th of August:

It cannot be true what they tell me, that you have given me up. It can only be a ruse on your part. It is impossible that all your vows are only perjury, that you carry weakness

to such an extent. You have no right to break all the promises you gave me—no right to repay me thus for my delicacy of feeling in returning you to your mother. You have no right to have allowed me to act as I have done on the strength of your promises of firmness. Subjective happiness had rendered me relatively indifferent, but suffering has dispersed all this, and my love has sprung forth in mighty and terrifying strength. Helene! If you really could be untrue to me, you would not be worthy of all I am suffering for you. Console me with one line! The thought that you could give me up brings me near to madness. As Lesley says: "Then everything would be a lie, and nothing in the world would be worth believing in."

Helene! Beloved, adored with all the agony of despair! Give me a line! Tell me you are true.

Again, a thing strikes me which does not seem to have occurred to any of those who have written about our sad story. Where were these fragments of Lassalle's letters to me found? They could never have come to my father's house, otherwise they would have been found after his death with all the others—even the earlier ones of the Rigi period. I can only surmise that Ferdinand—who was absent from Geneva—had entrusted these letters to the Countess to give to me. Of course I never received them.

I have now related everything that happened during the time of my stay in Bex, and, as far as we can gather from his letters, all that happened to Lassalle too.

As soon as my father was sure that Lassalle had left Geneva, we returned there, I again under the strictest surveillance. I remember very little about those days, and believe that nothing of any importance occurred.

Then a mighty blow fell upon me. My father entered my room and with a cruel smile handed me a piece of paper on which the following words were written:—

Fräulein! I have come here to arrange a matter which is both unconventional and unfortunate. I feel that my inter-

vention is not only justified, but is a duty I owe to my long friendship with Lassalle, to the full confidence with which he has placed this matter in my hands, and, as regards yourself, to the letter you addressed to me a short time ago. You will see that after all that has happened, it is even more to your interest than to that of Herr Lassalle that your liaison with him should be broken off in the most decisive manner. This can only be possible through my intervention, and I have decided to undertake this most unpleasant duty out of pure friendship to him. For this purpose I propose that you should come to me, either to-day or to-morrow afternoon between two and four o'clock. Any hesitation might spoil all. I consider it beneath my dignity, Fräulein, to assure you, that you need fear no scenes of any kind, but I can express the conviction that the step I am taking is one that will deserve your thanks.

SOPHIE, COUNTESS HATZFELD.

Every drop of the old Viking blood rose in me; my pride came to the fore. I was as much enraged as my father was at the impertinence of the woman who dared to write thus to me. Both he and Yanko approved of my indignation.

"What shall you answer," Yanko asked.

I took a card and wrote upon it, "*Lettre reçue*," and gave it to the messenger who had brought the letter, telling him to deliver it as a receipt for the same.

This act of the Countess was one of the most calamitous among the many things that led up to our fatal climax.

Did she know what she had done?

From this moment there arose in me distrust, indignation and defiance against all those friends of Lassalle who had congregated in Geneva during his absence.

My rage against the Countess was boundless, and it never abated. She well knew how Lassalle loved me, what he suffered; and she ought never to have dared to so insult the woman he held so high and for whom he was fighting at the present moment with the courage of a lion to his last drop of blood.

If *he* had had any idea of it, I am convinced he would have shot her down.

I little guessed that at this time Ferdinand was in Munich, and that there, as well as in other places, he was moving heaven and earth to attain our ends. I heard of all this many years later.

He tried to obtain a letter in Munich from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to my father. He also wanted the King (my former playmate) to issue a formal command to my father to give me in marriage to Lassalle immediately.

He travelled to Mayence to try and win Bishop Ketteler to our side, to induce him to baptize him and marry us. In short, he went through fire and water, and I did not know it, and believed him faithless, as he very soon had to believe me. Can one imagine the terrible tragedy of this situation?

What I now relate is written with my heart's blood. Every step forward for me meant despair and torments of hell! . . .

I suddenly heard one day Lassalle was in Geneva again! My faithful Thérèse brought me the news. Could it be true? I was now more rigidly guarded than ever, yet at the news my courage rose. I remembered all Ferdinand's consoling words, how he told me he would fetch me away from the altar if I stood there with another, and many, many other things which inspired me with new hope.

My family, for I will not lay the awful guilt at my father's door alone, heaped new miseries upon me.

My father came to me and said, almost pityingly, that Lassalle had sent a man to ask me to return his letters and presents. No! That could not be. My glorious lover could never act so meanly! My father insisted, and when I handed him the letters and souvenirs, weeping bitterly, he said, "Write a line with these which I will dictate to you."

I wrote I know not what—but as I put down on the paper at his dictation something utterly alien to my heart, it occurred to me that if I signed it with a pet name Ferdinand had given me, he must, and

would, understand! So beneath the dictated lines I wrote, "The Child."

To this day I do not know if he ever saw what I had been compelled to write, and understood the dumb prayer of "The Child." I cannot tell whether my father had arranged the whole thing himself, and kept the letters and presents, or if it was a machination of the Countess.

On several occasions I was made to give written declarations, and the demand was always preceded by the words: "You have sacrificed yourself to us once. Now, after having done a great thing, you cannot draw back before small ones!"

I who had heard nothing from Ferdinand, in spite of his presence in Geneva, considered myself entirely deserted by him.

Completely broken in spirit and body, I was coward enough to do everything they wished.

Among other things was a letter of which Holthoff wrote:

> I do not doubt that the letter to me was written under coercion. It was either a ruse on her part, or she wrote under pressure. Nevertheless, it is always possible that she has been carried away by a wave of filial love.

No! There was no question of filial love. The real motives were inexcusable. Yet the blind confidence in Lassalle's power, the subterfuge employed by my parents, were just as reprehensible as my weakness and *laisser-aller*.

Holthoff appears to have become less severe in his judgment since that letter, and even to-day I am pleased to know it. Perhaps he had looked at things from a worldly standpoint, from the point of view also of the anonymous author of the *Sorrows of Lassalle*, with whose ideas I greatly sympathise, when he says:

> As one can perceive in a former part, and finds here confirmed, Lassalle was of the opinion that his political position had influenced the attitude of Helene's parents towards him.

If this had been the case, it was quite comprehensible, for Lassalle's career was, to say the least of it, a peculiar one for the son-in-law of an Ambassador. The allusion to the difference of religion and the engagement of Helene to the Wallachian, were no doubt both of them quite valid reasons.

The ostensible and social reasons given by Helene's father against the marriage with Lassalle, were those he drew from the moral life of the latter, and the liaison which had lasted several years and which could not be denied. Lassalle's antecedents hardly offered a guarantee of any happiness to any girl, and other fathers than Helene's might have felt justified in drawing the same conclusions as he did. If his actions were based on certain moral convictions, no one had the right to criticise the means he employed; indeed there would be no foundation for any criticism.

Helene's memoirs have for the first time thrown more light on the subject.

Who can therefore judge and condemn others?

Helene is, of course, not impartial, and one must not lose sight of this fact.

Once more Lassalle had taken a foolish step, devoid of all knowledge of human nature. He had persuaded the Minister von Schwind to send with him as intercessor a certain lawyer, Dr. Haenle, who was a perfect stranger to all of us.

I willingly admit that this lawyer had the best intentions, but what could he possibly arrange?

He had never seen me before, and was now to deal with the deepest feelings of my wounded heart.

He certainly had the greatest respect for my father (one must remember the rôle my parents played in the intellectual life of Munich). As to Lassalle—he had been attached to him by "Superior orders" in a most intimate matter, without much previous acquaintance or sympathy with him.

Behind the scenes, that is, without my knowledge, another friend of Lassalle's, Colonel von Rüstow, had entered into negotiations with my father. What part he played to Lassalle's face I do not know; anyhow, I found he was a most devoted friend to the "good" Countess, and therefore shared her prejudices

against our union. In this capacity he presented himself to my father. His name was quite unknown to me.

One day my father said to me that a gentleman wished to speak to me; that he had brought me a letter from Lassalle.

A ray of hope seemed to enter my heart, but then my father continued sternly: "You cannot see this gentleman, and as for the letter, you must give it to me unopened. What use would it be to reopen a correspondence with the miserable cast-off lover of Countess Hatzfeld, whom you have already given up for our sakes? It would only lead to further insults."

This made me wince, for the recent insulting letter of the Countess was still fresh in my memory.

I nodded in silence.

My father left the room, and I felt utterly crushed. Had he been able then to discover no other way but this official one of sending me a letter?

He knew quite well that Thérèse was entirely devoted to both of us. This thought tormented me, and passed continually through my brain.

I wrung my hands in impotent despair. Perhaps, after all, the Countess—the woman to whom he had given his whole life—had succeeded in influencing him. Official letters, as papa said, could be full of insults.

Oh! The martyrdom of those hours.

My father soon reappeared with new demands. He wanted to dictate me a letter to Lassalle, which was to contain a definite refusal, for, as he said, "the man must be informed of this."

Once more I revolted. After entreaties and tears on my side and arguments on his, about the ruin or salvation of my family, which I held in my hands, I gave in.

He dictated the letter. I wrote it.

If Lassalle had but known me a little better he

would have understood at once on the perusal of such a letter that it could never emanate from me.

The dictation was as follows :—

SIR—Having with all my heart repented of my conduct, and having obtained the forgiveness of my *fiancé*, Yanko von Racowitza, whose love and confidence I have entirely regained, I beg to state of my own free will and inclination that there never can be any question of a union between you and me; that I sever myself entirely from all connection with you, and am firmly resolved to bestow all my devotion, love and constancy upon my *fiancé*.

I communicated the above to Herr von Holthoff in Berlin before even receiving his discouraging letter.

HELENE.

P.S.—I must request you to return me the letter you have already received from me.

Can any one who knew me imagine for a moment I could write such a letter? Even while I was penning it at my father's dictation, I had to smile at his stupidity in supposing it would ever lead to the success of his plans. It was so obviously alien to my nature.

Ferdinand, who was so at home in our classics, would surely be reminded of the scene between Wurm and Luise in *Kabale und Liebe*, and realise that his Helene was in a similar situation. Had he been alone, I am even now convinced this would have been the case, but I was reckoning without the influence the Countess and his other "friends" had over him!

The anonymous author of the *Sorrows of Lassalle* seems to have understood me better than the man I adored, for in his book he says:

The letter roused a storm of indignation, and yet every impartial reader could see clearly that in trying to prove too much, it proved nothing at all, except indeed the coercion under which it was written.

We know by Helene's letter to Holthoff, written in Wabern, how keenly she suffered at the thought of the unhappiness she was inflicting upon her earlier lover. And now, where the rôles are changed, is it likely that she would, in such a brutal manner,

dismiss the man she loved so well, in favour of this rejected lover, who was suddenly brought upon the scenes once more?

If Lassalle had retained the slightest power of judgment, or remained calm, he must have realised this at once. Indeed, the letter might have been a powerful weapon wherewith to prove the extent to which his beloved was deprived of all liberty of action and speech. In any case, it need never have caused the slightest uneasiness, or led to any change of tactics.

By command of the King, an interview is said to have taken place between Lassalle and my father, and the latter was unable to give his word of honour that I had acted of my own free will.

At this stage I do not clearly recollect whether the interview took place before or after the letter was written. The chief point, however, is how Lassalle was affected by the reception of it.

In any case, he did not abandon all hope, for after receiving it he wrote as follows to a friend:—

I will accept anything, provided it lead to the possession of Helene. I could always manage the father. The chief thing is to arrange an interview between Helene and the Countess; the latter will make her *au fait* with everything, and even show her my letters without, however, giving the present situation and plans away. Just now Helene has been talked into a state of filial devotion, and I consider she would be capable of betraying our plans to her father. He, of course, could then take precautions and she would be lost!

Nevertheless, one must make Helene understand that help from our side is near at hand, and thus inspire her with courage. Half her actions are due to the state of hopelessness to which she has been reduced. Why do I expose her to these struggles? I am the idiot, that is certain!

According to this letter, he must have had an idea of the terrible power of suggestion exercised upon me by my environment. Even to-day my sensitive nature is too easily influenced; what must it have been then, before I had been steeled in the school of suffering?

At that time little was known of suggestion or hypnotism; one took no heed of such things, but

Lassalle, with the prophetic eye of genius, detected them nevertheless.

This letter is the last link in the chain that bound us together, the last expression of his true nature, unbiased by the influence of his surroundings.

Now the most awful hour of all arrived, the hour in which the interview took place between Dr. Haenle, Rüstow, and myself, over which my father presided.

I was told the King had sent a messenger, to whom I was to repeat that which I had decided. In order to avoid undue influence of any kind which would be easy enough in my present weak state, my father said he would be present to support me. I entered the room in a state of apathy, not unmixed with a tinge of ironical contempt—and faced the strangers. At the bottom of my heart I was counting on Haenle, but four cold eyes expressing curiosity and dislike met mine. My heart contracted.

Rüstow seemed to me a sort of devil, influenced by the Countess, the other one a mere indifferent onlooker.

I have been reproached with having uttered the most heartless things during this interview, as the conversation was taken down by the strangers as deposition. I will not accuse them of lying, any more than I will attempt to excuse myself. Perhaps those who are able to picture themselves in my situation can understand my apparently heartless behaviour. Sullen indignation and defiance mingled with the despair at my heart. How could Lassalle expose me to such a situation and allow the secrets of my soul to be exposed to the inquisition of such men — who evidently were friends of the Countess, and inimical to me? He had always understood me so well—even my most sensitive feelings. He must have known that, in the presence of my father, I could only express that which he wished me to.

No matter what happened, that hour has burdened me with a terrible sense of guilt, for out of it arose the duel which took place shortly after.

These men with their reports broke the last links that united me to Lassalle; at one stroke they persuaded him of my unworthiness, and drove him from the depths of despair into a paroxysm of rage.

Can one reproach him for this? Certainly I cannot.

CHAPTER XXIV

DESTINY now hurried with rapid strides towards its appointed goal.

One afternoon I sat down to write to Dr. Haenle, for Yanko had promised me to take a letter to him without my father knowing it; I wanted to ask him to receive me alone, so that I could at last open my heart and speak freely to one of Lassalle's friends. I hoped that after this interview he and Yanko would help me to return to Ferdinand, and thus escape for ever from my father's house.

Whilst I was writing this letter, which might have changed everything—*everything*, Yanko entered; he approached me in silence, drew my hands away from the paper, and in reply to my questioning look he said softly, "You need not write that letter now. I shall never be able to deliver it. Lassalle has just challenged your father in duel, and I am going to fight instead of him."

Horrified, and scarcely understanding what he meant, I looked up at him, but he simply nodded and went out—leaving me alone in my anguish—to join the other men who were consulting with my father as to the best course to pursue.

I learnt nothing more.

Great excitement reigned in the household; that was all I noticed.

A strange feeling took possession of me. It never even occurred to me that there could be any question in regard to the duel. I had always lived in a com-

munity where the duel was considered the only proper means of avenging an insult to one's honour. During my wretched hours there came a moment when I almost looked forward to it as a possible means of salvation, for I was so convinced (as no doubt was Lassalle himself) that he would kill poor Yanko. I knew that Lassalle was a deadly shot. Once he had said to me, jokingly, "Whoever tries to rob me of you I'll shoot straight in the heart, just as I always hit the bull's eye on a target." Yanko had hardly ever held a weapon.

I now believed my opportunity had arrived. Lassalle will kill Yanko, thought I, and the poor boy will be brought home dead, everything will be in the utmost confusion. I will escape, and at last I will be united to Ferdinand.

My heart in this hour fluctuated between hope and grief. I carefully prepared everything for my flight, burnt all my letters, packed a little bag, hoped, planned, and waited. It is true that during these hours I was coldly indifferent to the suffering and fate of my unfortunate Yanko. Later on, I was able to make up to him for this.

Just now my whole soul winged its flight towards my idolised Ferdinand.

On the morning of the 28th Yanko left me after a brief farewell. I was perfectly certain I should never see him alive again; then followed a few hours of restless waiting, and of listening for the carriage which was to bring home the "corpse."

Suddenly there was a sound of furious driving—and Yanko stood before me.

It was an agonising moment for me when I beheld him, whom I had hoped and believed as dead, standing alive before me.

Few words were said, although he was kneeling before me as if to beg for mercy.

He had hit where he had intended to spare! His very ignorance of fire-arms had caused the disaster;

he had aimed at the ground in order to avoid his opponent; the force of the recoil had jerked his hand upwards, and . . . I hardly heard him . . . he had hit Lassalle! Wounded!!!

Was it really possible?

And what now?

. . . Yes . . . What now?

The thought rang in my soul, "How can I get to him? The Countess will be there, and all the other men—who hate me—all hate me—all—all!"

I sat cold and apathetic for hours, staring at the trees in the park. I was not in the least moved by the words of sympathy and consolation that the "living" Yanko poured upon me. On the third day he came to me again, and stammered out amidst his sobs, "He is dead."

I pushed him from me. "Go—I hate you," I cried—then the whole world was blotted out.

For a long, long time afterwards an absolute incapacity for feeling anything took possession of me.

I can relate no more of this period, for, after that hour, nothing made impression enough on me to remain in my memory. I know that I was dragged to Berne, to Munich, but why, and what happened there, I know not.

I only remember one thing; in the depths of my heart I did not believe in Ferdinand's death. Years afterwards I said, "If I were told he were alive somewhere—anywhere in the world—I should believe it, and go to find him."

Dreadful times followed. All the venomous pamphlets that were directed against me by the opposite "party" were sent to me by revengeful friends—*his* friends!

Poor things! *Our* souls had found and understood each other long since.

It is not surprising that the impression I made on people at this period was quite uncanny. The

anonymous author of the *Sorrows of Lassalle* wrote:

"One of the people participating in the tragedy, thus described the almost uncanny impression that Helene made on him. Pale as death, with white lips and long black dress, her large eyes, seemingly bereft of soul, were fixed on space. She seemed to him a ghost, a vampire, or one of those legendary living-dead beings.

"We saw her but for a few moments. She resembled a marble bust with golden hair,—a nixie risen from the grotto of Capri,—the wife of a Cæsar, endowed with demoniacal power."

To conclude the history of this awful tragedy in my life, I will quote the portion of a letter written by Lassalle to a lady who has remained unknown, as it will serve to give an absolute description of his character. Seldom in the history of mankind has a human being so completely known and described himself as Ferdinand Lassalle does here. In the first part the letter deals with the aversion the lady felt for Countess Hatzfeld; the second part ran thus:

I will now tell you what I understand by love. If a woman wishes to love me, she must give herself to me entirely, lose herself completely in me, and expect nothing more in return than a portion of myself. You will say this is an unequal exchange, but if you reflect a little you will see that this is the usual normal difference between the love of man and that of woman.

A man, for instance, gives a portion of himself to the state, or to science, and therefore can only give himself partially up to love; whereas a woman is able to, and *ought* to, give herself up entirely to it.

If this is a general rule, how much more shall it apply to me in particular, who am so very much a man? I have been through all kinds of misfortune and trouble, except one, which I cannot have, and never will allow to come near me, and this is the disturbance of the harmony of my inner self.

It has been my pride and my greatest happiness to keep this intact. Dispositions like mine can know no happiness apart from this; therefore I must do my best to keep it. Remember

my long allusion to this in Hütten's speech to Maria; read it, for it is all taken from my deepest and most personal feelings.

"Willst Spaltung in den eig'nen Busen bringen?" etc.
(Wilt thou bring discord now within thy breast? etc.)

You will see that I cannot do without this inmost harmony. It is the foundation of my being, the strength and support of my life. I should be miserable if it were ever disturbed. I should feel annihilated and without defence. It is the Alpha and Omega of my existence. It must be able to console me for all outward struggles and conflicts, and compensate me for many pleasurable things I have given up.

Whoever wishes to love me, and be beloved by me, must become a part of myself and be in absolute harmony with me—like what I like, think what I think, and become united with my world of thought and feeling in all things, because it is clear that, should this not be the case, it would bring discord into the very centre of my being. Other men might be able to bear this, but not I, because I have made this inner harmony the shield and protection of my life. I will not argue as to the justification of my ideas, I only know that it is the case with me, and that I cannot alter it.

My love is therefore of a consuming nature, and the being who loves me, if not absolutely in unity with me, would have to be remoulded according to my views. If, however, the person were incapable of being remoulded, he or she must rely upon his own individuality, and give up loving me. Should I never find love under these conditions, I prefer to do without it, and wander loveless upon a barren world. At least I should avoid inward discord, and keep my Samson's locks, which are the source of my strength, until the end of my days.

I have never pretended that it is any great privilege to love me. In fact, I wrote to you lately that it is a most thankless task. As I have said before, whoever wishes to love me must do it in my own way, and become identified with my inward self, just as Semele melted in the arms of Jupiter. No doubt, for such people who are not so constituted, such love possesses but little attraction. Nevertheless it is the only way to reach my heart.

If you remember, I purposely did not wish to draw you into any love-affair with me because, very naturally, you might regard such love as egoism. I never took the initiative; you yourself felt and declared it to be an inward necessity of your own. I never should have taken the initiative because I know that such love as mine can give but little joy, and that there are

very few women ready to give themselves up entirely to anything so serious. I never made any secret to you of my relationship with the Countess, but told you from the first that she is, and always will be, my best friend. In fact, your love for me dates almost from your knowledge of this liaison, and from the speeches I made in Cologne. My peculiarities were never concealed from you, therefore you can never say I deceived you.

I believe you could love me in any way, in spite of my great friendship with the Countess. My attachment to her partakes more of the nature of the affection of a son to a mother, a brother to a sister, a friend to a friend, and a father to a daughter. It has something of all these, but it has nothing of that of a lover to the beloved. Therefore it need stand in no woman's way any more than Pylades did to the lover of Orestes.

Apparently you are unable to put up with all this, therefore, without any recrimination or reproach, the fact remains that we cannot love each other.

You seem to upbraid me in your letter for not having abandoned hope; you also seem surprised that I am annoyed at things which you have said now and again. The reason for this is, that one can never hope to find perfect unity in any woman, but must try to cultivate it. I reckoned on this moulding process, and you must acknowledge that for a long time I have taken a great deal of trouble in trying to remould you.

Eh bien!—it did not succeed, either because you were too strong, or your love was too weak. I see clearly by your last letter that it is impossible, and that which I considered as a momentary conflict is a fundamental part of your nature. I also see that you wish me to be absolutely frank. I think I have stated everything clearly enough. To sum up—you write that you are convinced "that matters can never be on a satisfactory footing with you two." Very well! neither would it be with me alone.

There ends this remarkable letter, which is of a very different tone from the passionate ones written during our tragic story. This portrait, drawn by himself, of the man I loved so well, moves me deeply even now—as deeply as if he stood before me once more, in all the strength of his wonderful personality, with all his power of attraction, powerful, dominant, and yet breaking up so miserably on such an

insignificant thing as the weakness and cowardice of a young woman.

One may perhaps be justified in the query: "Was this weakness the cause of his destruction?" The discussion has often arisen as to what rôle Lassalle would have played in the development of Germany during the 'seventies. Would he, in the boundless reach of his personal plans, with his incomparable ambition and will, ever have been able to adapt himself in the compact, gigantic edifice of the German Empire? Assuredly it must always have seemed to him like a prison! I therefore ask whether we pigmies, *all of us*, were not mere puppets in the hands of destiny, and used *by the spirit of the world's history* as the means of sweeping away the giant who could have found no place in the Empire.

CHAPTER XXV

Now followed in my life months of horror beyond description. To be obliged to remain with my detested parents, and to see no deliverance but in a marriage with the man who, even although he had not wished it, was still the murderer of Ferdinand! . . . Can one imagine a more terrible situation? The apathy I have already mentioned had taken possession of me, and protected me during the earlier time from some desperate act. Poor Yanko surrounded me with such tender care, lamented and wept so bitterly with me over our fate, that at last I pitied him even more than I did myself. In my eyes—I have said it thousands of times, and can only repeat it again and again—the murderer of Lassalle was not Yanko, but my father. Yanko had been forced into the appalling situation. They had bewildered his not too keen understanding with false notions of honour; persuaded him he must take my father's place, and save my honour which had been tarnished by Lassalle and the Countess. In short, they had forced the weapon into his hand with which he, *without wishing it* (that I can swear before God and everything I hold sacred), had killed the man for whose sake he had really meant to sacrifice himself.

How often we talked of it later, how he had intended, if the gods had been more merciful, to take me himself to Lassalle, to redeem the promise he had given to Grandmamma to make me happy, and to watch over my happiness.

He was my only friend in those dark days—the

only human being I could speak to and tell all that was in my heart; who understood me and my pain, yet who shared it. Whoever considers this miserable position at home, my hatred of all my cruel relations, who never for one moment felt the slightest pity for me, will say with Yanko von Racowitza, "You cannot possibly stay here, as circumstances are. Only *I* can protect you against these unmerciful creatures. My heart alone can comprehend your suffering." Whoever understands this young noble heart will also understand mine, when I fled to it as my sole refuge, and was thus eventually induced to marry the murderer of F. Lassalle—who yet was innocent.

It was not only this great love and pity for my suffering that bound me to him, but his truthful open nature, and fearless disposition. I have suffered so much in life from the contrary that, to this day, I am grateful to him; for it needed courage to tell the woman he had loved all the dreadful details of his young and passionate life before he had known me. I forgave all, not only because of his frankness, but because I understood his fiery southern nature. I trusted him as he trusted me, and the old hand of friendship between us was stronger than ever.

Still, we were not as yet to speak of marriage. First of all came a sort of chase. Poor Yanko was hunted throughout Europe from land to land. The Swiss authorities demanded his arrest, and only by aid of all kinds of diplomatic finesse did my father succeed in getting him, on various pretexts, to Bucharest, to Vienna, Paris, and Munich, and back again to Bucharest. It was a bitterly cold winter, and the delicate southerner, now only twenty-one years of age, contracted on these journeys, in snow and storm, an injury affecting his lungs from which he never recovered.

In the spring of the following year he was hopelessly consumptive, given up by the doctors, and his cry of longing for me—the only person he loved—

penetrated straight to my heart. I had nothing more to lose on this earth; I went with my parents to his sick-bed.

As is always the case in such illnesses, his state fluctuated from slight improvement at joyful news—such as my arrival—to the deepest misery.

On our wedding-day a strange event made a deep impression upon us. To give this its full importance I must sketch a little picture of my life in Wallachia.

In order to breathe better country air Yanko was taken from Bucharest to the country place of his family. But there the family mansion was barely completed, and the invalid was not allowed to live in the house, which was still damp. Therefore, for the first weeks, we went to the "farmer's" house.

What that meant can only be imagined by those who know these hovels. To European civilised conceptions it defies all description. Mice and rats lived in complete harmony with us; at night they ate up our bedroom tallow candles. My love of animals stood me then in good stead. I did not quail at the sight of these creatures. In spite of this, my courage failed when, as soon as we went to bed, odorous bugs fell on our heads from the rotten beams above us, and made any idea of slumber an illusion. Added to this was a real Rumanian peculiarity. All round the farmer's house, which could only be reached by a narrow gravel path, immense herds of swine lived, wallowed, and flourished. By day they roamed the vast oak forests, and at night the most sagacious ones preferred camping round about the house. Grunting and grumbling arose throughout the evening and night!

All these native delights were the despair of poor sick Yanko. He felt humiliated and unhappy that he had brought me—the spoilt European child—into these Asiatic wilds. He sat half the night through upon his bed, and wept in dire depression. It was I

who had to console him, and call up my once-vaunted good spirits to our help. One thing he realised. What could these mere outward worries matter in comparison with the soul torments we had already gone through?

Often when I saw his courage giving way, and he complained of these things (chiefly of the pigs rubbing themselves against every corner of the house), I found my good-humour once more, and consoled him, saying jokingly, "Can't you hear? That is a great fat beauty—as our farmer says, a 'Sow-father.' He makes the whole house tremble; he is worth his weight in ducats, and will help us get to Egypt and get you quite cured!" Then he smiled beneath his tears, but suffered nevertheless under these Asiatic conditions. In all this dirt we were surrounded by quantities of servants. When we were able to go into the family house, I counted thirty-six of them, all *helping each other to do nothing for our comfort.* Men cooks—a different one for every kind of dish; women cooks for sweet dishes and milk puddings; servants for cleaning silver; lamp cleaners; kitchen-maids and under menial men servants and chamber-maids for every one of us; a coachman for me—a handsome gipsy, by the way—a servant for Yanko and his parents; stable men and boys—in short, an innumerable herd.

Before our wedding, Yanko's sister arrived with her husband, and then there were more servants still.

The stable was just as luxurious, and it was a common occurrence to drive out with four, six, eight, or even twelve horses, driven sometimes tandem, with gipsy outriders in bright dresses. It was really gorgeous.

The above-mentioned brother-in-law was a rough, brutal sort of man, for whom I felt the deepest antipathy. Let me relate here one little story about him, which will serve to illustrate the country and its customs.

On the last evening but one before our wedding, this nobleman had thrashed our priest in such a manner (they had quarrelled about the hay harvest) that only the interference of Yanko, with the warning that the "pope" would not be able to wed us if he were thrashed too much, made an end of the scandalous affair.

If my heart had not been so heavy from the sorrows I had just passed through, I think I could not have borne the thought of spending my life in such surroundings. But this heart was—excepting for Yanko and his illness—indifferent to everything.

My father was delighted with the fine hunting (he even found wolves to kill), and my mother no doubt found the surroundings here very similar to those she had intended for me at the time with the old Colonel in Sardinia. Our wedding-day approached. Everything glittered in festal array. The peasants were in their finest furs, even the women; for although it was a very hot day in June, none of them who wished to be admired appeared without a fur, with the hair half hidden by embroidered veils richly ornamented with ducats. Many of the girls wore the whole of their bridal treasure on their heads. The embroidered shirts that hung down to the calves were held behind by a piece of stuff like an apron richly interwoven.

The "pope" who had been thrashed was also in full dress, and awaited us at the church door. It was a picture of vivid colour in the burning sunshine.

I saw nothing but my poor Yanko looking so pale and so ill, and my heart was anything but joyful. I had pictured my marriage very differently, and with another bridegroom. I felt nothing but compassion for the young heart beside me, and pity for myself that I was here; yet I realised that this heart alone was my place of refuge in this merciless world.

During the long wedding ceremonial of the Greek rites within the little church, the sky without grew

dark, heavy thunderclouds crept up, and flash upon flash of lightning followed.

Suddenly a tremendous clap of thunder! We all stood terrified; the lightning struck a tree just outside the church—one of three standing together—and split it through the centre.

A murmur arose, in and around the church: "A bad omen! The poor young wife!" Voices grew loud, for the tree was Yanko's life-tree. His father, at the birth of his three children, had planted on the hill by the church a young tree for each of them. They all had flourished—but now the one most recently planted lay felled to the ground.

This curious circumstance was made light of by our relations, who tried to banish it from our memory, but the omen was fulfilled.

I do not wish to tell much about this short, sad married life, which on my side was merely the nursing of an invalid. Could I describe the slow death of a consumptive patient who was happy at last in the possession of the woman he loved?

We passed a few weeks in the fashionable and luxurious Rumanian bathing-place, Mehadia, where we were fêted and admired, because he was so dark and I so fair. It was here that I discovered that that which I had learned in Nice of the customs of the international world was child's play compared to the laxity of morals that prevailed in Rumanian society. Here every woman lived with some one else's husband, and every man with another's wife. They did it quite openly, and one got quite bewildered at the *chronique scandaleuse* of this elegant bathing-place. Then we went to all sorts of health resorts, seeking alleviation for the coughing fits of my poor sufferer. Among other places we went to the Kochellak in the Bavarian mountains, where we met several interesting and clever people. There were professors and musicians with their pretty and amusing wives, many of them Dessauer families and

landowners in the place. We met frequently, and I read aloud to some of them, played and sang. When Yanko could not join us, I preferred remaining with him, for I had determined to devote myself absolutely to him—and this I did. Once they all begged me to take part in a rowing expedition, and as Yanko added his persuasions I allowed myself to accept. I went with them to the end of the garden where the boats lay, but when they got in, I felt I could not join them, and flew, rather than walked, back to the house.

On the stairs I heard Yanko playing the piano softly, and when I stood before him so unexpectedly I shall never forget his glad look of gratitude. How the glorious dark eyes lit up!

I see him still before me. This little moment has often consoled me in later life, and made me glad that I am as I am—in spite of all that others may think of me. Let us recall here another little incident which will show the impression we two young people made. We had gone to Meran, where Yanko's mother with her household was passing the autumn. I had therefore given a holiday to my faithful Thérèse, and Yanko to his valet—letting them go home for a short time before we went south.

Hardly had we been there a few days when the mother-in-law was called away suddenly by her husband, and travelled bag and baggage to Paris, leaving us two quite alone. Compared with the old Racowitzas, my parents were people of heart and sentiment! We telegraphed at once to our servants; nevertheless we were a few days by ourselves, and at the mercy of a strange woman. The doctor had forbidden Yanko to eat hotel food; he was to have simple but nourishing fare. I declared with pride that I could prepare a simple meal, and the result was as follows. The woman made a fire, and got together the necessary things. My wardrobe was very elegant, but by no means adapted to cooking operations. So for this memorable occasion I wore a white lace

négligé, and boldly took up my duties as *chef*. We agreed on the following menu! Bouillon, beefsteak with baked potatoes, salad, and an omelette soufflée.

My knowledge of cooking was based chiefly on Liebig's Cookery Book. The bouillon was splendid! Meat was cut into little pieces, and laid in cold water with the necessary herbs and salt, then left to cook for hours until a strong tasty broth developed itself, to which *Gries* was added. The beefsteak also was quite good. Yanko peeled the potatoes, sitting outside the kitchen window on the ledge which runs round every Tyrolese house. He knew how to beat up the eggs for the omelette, and, laughing like children, our self-cooked meal went off very well. Meran and Botzen fruits ended the feast, and my dear good invalid declared he had never tasted anything so excellent. I had hardly put him to bed for his afternoon sleep when the woman appeared and announced, "The old Countess F. is here—the lady who lives below us."

I did not know her, but asked her to come in. She, a dear aristocratic-looking old lady, came towards me with outstretched hands and exclaimed, "Please do not be angry with me, dear young princess, my husband sends me! We both watched you to-day at your cooking, and he said it looked so sweet, so charming—but whether we would like to *eat* what was cooked is another matter! Therefore, we beg you, until your servants arrive, to allow us to share our dinner with you."

Amidst thanks, laughter, and joking, the amiable offer was accepted, in spite of Yanko's praise of my culinary knowledge, which I feared would not suffice for a second menu! Two days later our servants came, and we soon left Meran to go to Egypt, where we were sent by the doctors.

Here also our stay was not of long duration, for Yanko did not like it at all—he coughed more than ever, and I grew nervous at being so far away from

all friends. We went to Corfu to pass the winter. This was the most unfortunate thing to do, for cholera was raging in various places, and in Corfu a very strict quarantine was held. We had to stay twelve days on a rock in the sea, in a miserable wooden building, which seemed more like a stable than a human dwelling-place. The beds were of planks, supported by stone blocks, and here I had to remain with my invalid.

For a week we had most dreadful weather; the rain came through the planks which served as a roof. In short, it was a state of things which must have tried even the strongest. To my poor patient it gave the finishing touch.

When at last we were released from quarantine, we went to the hotel in Corfu. The doctor told me that Yanko's illness had advanced from the chronic to the acute stage. It was now only a matter of days.

One could perhaps imagine my despair if putting oneself in my place. I was all alone in a country where I did not know a soul, and the only one upon whom I had built my hopes and trust was condemned to death.

Sobbing bitterly, and not knowing what to do, I walked up and down the *banal* hotel drawing-room, while my invalid lay in the next room in a half-delirious slumber. The doctor returned to tell me we should do better to take the next ship to Italy, for if Yanko were to die here in the hotel, I should have to re-paper the whole étage and buy new carpets, etc., there being danger of infection; and after his death I would not be allowed to take the *corpse* away with me. Thus he spoke of the living!

How was I, who had never lifted a finger for myself—for whom everything had hitherto been done by others—to arrange all this? Withal, I was to remember the warning that the sick man was to know nothing of it all. This was an hour that rivalled the bitterest of my life.

Yanko called my name softly. I put on a friendly smile and went to him.

"Beloved," he whispered hoarsely, "don't you think this is a dreadful place?"

I nodded and said immediately, "Yes, you are right. Shall we go to Nice where we have friends, and where we are nearer home?"

"As soon as my money comes we will go," he replied; "but this cannot be before the 15th of November. We must wait on till then." It was now the 7th.

The next minute he had forgotten what he had said; weakness overcame him; he slumbered, and despair again took possession of me. I stood at the window in the deepest distress. Then there came a soft tap at the door.

I called out, "Come in"; and a tall, elderly gentleman with white hair and beard stood before me. He said compassionately, and in German, "You poor, *poor* child." I did not know who he was, but the tone and speech went straight to my heart. I flew to his arms and wept bitterly. He let me weep awhile, softly stroking my hair, then he said, "I am the Prussian consul, von Fels. I heard of your dreadful trouble, and my wife and I place ourselves and our house completely at your disposal."

How was I to thank him? how accept his offer? I can find no words even now to express my gratitude to the noble man and his kind wife for all they did for me then. No doubt both of them are dead long ago. May their memory be blessed, even beyond the grave!

They arranged everything for me. The consul put the necessary money at my disposal, made all inquiries regarding the journey, and returned after a short time to tell me that in a few days an English merchant-ship was to sail, and could take us to Ancona.

Yanko looked upon all this as a direct message

from above. He was too weak and ill to think much about it. I told him that Herr von Fels was a friend of my father, that was why he did everything for us; and he was satisfied.

The prospect of the journey gave him new courage, and next day he was able to drive out in the blossoming sunny country around Corfu, where the naive Greek natives wondered at us, and expressed their sympathy for the "beautiful red-blonde Northern lady, with the dark young husband who looked so ill."

In a few days he was carried on board, and we started for Italy on the most beautiful ship I had ever seen. The captain—God bless him!—looked after Yanko like a mother during the crossing. He carried him himself into the sunshine, cared for him day and night; and after arriving in Ancona, and having helped my poor patient into the carriage, escaped from my thanks so quickly, that I was never able to tell him how deeply grateful I was for his kindness. We reached Bologna and stayed at the comfortable Hotel Brun. I was alone with Yanko, and had allowed our servants to go out for an hour to see the town, when he fainted away. With superhuman efforts I lifted him on to the bed, which he left no more. On December 12 he fell quietly asleep, leaving me alone and friendless in the world after five months of wedded life. No, this is not true! Friends enough there were, and true friends among them, but no one to lean on. The bridge between me and the society life in which I was born and bred was broken.

Dreadful things now happened. My father, in spite of the calculating astuteness he had shown in the Lassalle affair, had made no marriage contract for me with the Racowitzas. They refused me all rights of succession, and did not even give me back my jewels and trousseau, which I had left in Wallachia. My father merely said haughtily, "Let us take no notice of this band of Rumanian swineherds. You

won't starve without them." He did not say how I should escape starvation, nor did he do anything later to prevent it. Cleverness in money matters was never my strong point. I never understood how to arrange my affairs advantageously, so I did not trouble about such things then, as my whole heart was steeped in misery.

Another dreadful moment occurred shortly after Yanko's death. I will tell of it to show that this was a time of sorrow and pain. After endless trouble with the Italian Government I at last got permission to take Yanko's remains, as he had wished, to Nice with me. He wanted to be buried there, because he said I should always return there. When I communicated this last wish to his family, then in Nice, they telegraphed back to me, *Enterrez où vous voulez, mais pas ici.* I relate this as a mere detail, to show what they were like. I took no further notice of them. Taking the body, I travelled at night in miserable slow trains, by short distances at a time, as the superstitious upper classes in Italy would not travel with a corpse.

In Geneva there were even greater difficulties. The coffin had to remain at the station in an extra carriage, whilst I went to find a ship. The night before I was to get the body on board, a sudden report flew about that the station was in flames. This was the crowning-point of my troubles. I drove madly through the streets towards the station, which could only be reached in some hours. The good, pious people had already moved the hearse to a safe place, so my anguish of mind had been unnecessary.

In Nice, in a beautiful old churchyard, the poor young heart, that had beaten and suffered only for me, was laid to rest. I, however, had to live on in the noisy, restless world—to live and struggle and suffer—suffer as I do even to-day in my stormy old age.

PART V

In Nice with Medora Ward—Nearly a Jesuit—In Paris—Nearly at the Court of Napoleon III.—In Berlin—Theatre studies—Nearly in Bismarck's service—The stage is victorious—Siegwart Friedmann—New wedlock—In Vienna—Divorce—Franz Lenbach—Hans Makart—Franz Liszt—Heinrich Laube and his house.

CHAPTER XXVI

I WAS now free as a bird, at the mercy of the world, and all possibilities and impossibilities.

I was free as a bird, without support in my family, without deeper religious feeling, for the terrible sorrow I had been through had shaken my faith in God, and not replaced it by any other ideal view of life. Germany was going through a period of the crassest materialism, which offered me no substitute, although at the time I was deep in the study of natural sciences.

With this void within me, and the blunting of my best feelings, with a nature that knew no check, and reacted most powerfully to every impression of the senses, I was like a ship on the sea of life, exposed to all tempests, without a pilot.

Between Lassalle's and Yanko's death I had already begun to learn how the world can treat a woman who has been marked by fate.

From that time I learned to pay little attention to the world's verdict, for it mostly judges without knowledge of circumstances or regard to them.

At that time the pride arose in me that enables one to hold one's head high, because one is justified in respecting oneself, no matter how deeply one must wade through the mire of contempt. Pride, courage, and love of truth are necessary in such circumstances to combat with the world and its prejudices.

Bitter tears flowed during my silent nights, but in the day I dried my eyes, and put on a smiling

face, which those merciless ones mistook for callousness and lightness! From my own family I got no love of any sort.

The day I buried my poor Yanko in Nice, my parents, then living in Munich, gave a big party (this I heard later from my old governess, who was still in the house and educating the younger sisters). For such a trivial detail it was not worth while putting off so many people.

Just at first I stayed with my dearest friend—a beautiful American—Mrs. Medora W. She and her mother were now in Nice, and invited me to share their hospitality.

It was an interesting house, and interesting people visited it. Medora had an eventful life behind her.

Married very young to one of New York's richest and fastest men, the poor thing had gone through everything possible in the short time. Her husband soon had not a penny; he squandered all his money on cards and women. He also drank. When misery had reached its height, the wife's mother appeared, and took her and her two little sons to Europe. Here she lived with them until Medora's death.

This mother was one of the most remarkable women I have ever known, and although nearly seventy was still more beautiful than her two daughters, who were both noted beauties. She was a South American — her father had been the last Spanish Governor of Louisiana, and her husband the first American one.

When, on great occasions, she put on full dress, one could hardly imagine anything more distinguished or more elegant than this tall old lady, who moved with royal *grandezza*. In daily life she went about in torn or worn-out cotton dresses, and shoes down-at-heel. She was hasty, hot-tempered, but always witty and amusing, and full of interesting anecdotes.

Although she had been through so much trouble, nevertheless Medora was one of the wittiest and most

amiable of companions, and knew everybody in Nice that had any pretensions to wit and elegance. We read many biographies together, and thus had continually new topics of conversation. St. Simon's works, in many volumes, and many others of the same or a little later period, interested us most. We declared at last that we knew the French Court circles of that time better than the life which surrounded us every day. At this season no celebrities were in Nice, merely the usual residents, mostly of good family, and more or less interesting. The following incident is characteristic of the strange old lady, and not without interest.

Among those present during the winter in Nice was the beautiful Princess S., who later ended miserably through gambling, etc. I admired her immensely. She was a magnificently-built woman, and had an absolutely innocent and childlike expression, with the complexion of a child of five, and large tender eyes like a doe.

Not exactly childlike stories were told of her love adventures, which were so far noteworthy that she never allowed a lover more than once into her "alcove," pretending afterwards that she did not know him, if by chance they met. This habit has led as yet to no particular consequences, as she chiefly chose her lovers from quite a different class of society from that of the *grand monde* to which she belonged. But once it was otherwise, and this single case spoilt her position once for all in Nice society. At the time I speak of she was the queen of the winter, very rich, with splendid dresses and regal jewels, and her hospitality attracted all whom she wished to her house. She had just sent out invitations for one of her famous *bals costumés*. People said that this time it was to be especially magnificent, and she herself would change her costume three or four times.

The Princess, who was flattered by the admiration

of a woman as much admired as I then was, begged me to lay aside my mourning for the day of her ball, and come to it, even if masked. All Nice talked of nothing else but the ball at the Russian Princess's.

I could not deny that it would amuse me immensely to watch it all, but I said, and this was also Medora's opinion, that it was not feasible, or compatible with my widow's weeds.

Medora's mother (Mrs. Grymes) thought otherwise. Her Spanish blood could not resist a masked ball any more than one did in the days of Don Juan. She thought out a plan. Medora was to go quietly to the ball alone at nine. We helped her dress, and admired her costume of yellow and gold (she was to represent Mexico). It showed her curious beauty to great advantage, and she drove off, her mother promising to follow her in domino at eleven and watch the fête for a short time before returning home with her.

Hardly had Medora departed, than the dear old lady began, as we had planned, to make me unrecognisable.

"I understand how to do it; I have done it hundreds of times," she said. "The devil himself would have to be very clever who would know you when you are out of my hands." She touched up not only my lashes and eyebrows with black, but all round the eyes, part of the forehead and cheeks, and a black wig hid my red hair. She then stuffed me out (I was very slender then), and over all came a loose, wide black domino, exactly like her own, with a hood that fitted closely round the face. Then we drove off together.

On entering the ball-room I at once noticed Prince Carlo L. di F., my most ardent admirer, of whom I shall speak later. He was leaning against a pillar looking very bored. He seemed to notice the two black dominoes directly, looked more closely, stooped a moment to catch sight of our feet, then came

unhesitatingly up to me. "Thank God you are come, Madonna Elena, although it is terribly frivolous of you to come to a ball while you are in deep mourning!"

I pretended not to understand him, but he quietly took my arm, and said, "Don't you think I would have known you at once in spite of all masks, and among a thousand, by your walk, hand and foot? Only one person possesses them!"

My denial was of no avail. Soon the Princess entered dressed as an old Russian Boyarde—literally clothed in diamonds, rubies, pearls and emeralds. She came towards me—guessed whom I might be, but did not recognise me.

On the other hand, the old King Louis I. of Bavaria, who had abdicated in 1848, came with the gentlemen of his suite into the little boudoir I had chosen as a refuge, being a little frightened at the non-success of my disguise. He called out in his loud, brusque manner:

"Ah, here she is—the Helenerl, frivolous bird! to come to a ball in the deepest widow's weeds! You wait!"

I pretended not to know him, not to understand German, but in vain.

I soon fled homewards.

Next midday, when I was resting on the sofa, the door opened and the man-servant announced, "His Majesty—the King of Bavaria!"

I jumped up; he came with upraised forefinger towards me threateningly:

"Child, I come to scold you! Every one recognised you, and I have nothing to do now but to defend my little widow (as she is my own subject) against the reproach of the most dreadful frivolity. No denial is of any use now, I am perfectly certain it was you."

I tried once more to deny—but vainly. Thus ended my first and last masquerade. Masks to me

seem dreadful things, like all disguises and everything untrue or simulated.

Yet a few words about the beautiful Princess S. She appeared at this fête in three costumes, first as a blue flower, covered with sapphires, and gleaming in the cold light of these lovely stones. She was dressed in big blue silk flowers, out of which peeped her charming little head. Then in the already mentioned Boyarde costume, of old brocade and fur, and at last as Rose Queen—her dress, hair and breast strewn with roses in each of which gleamed, as dew-drop, an enormous diamond.

On this evening she showed the world all her splendid jewels which she lost later on in gambling.

The catastrophe which cost the fêted beauty her position in society happened as follows: One of the lovers chosen for her solitary love-meeting was a young engineer, who had really fallen in love with her, and would not obey her command not to see her again. He procured a ticket for a charity ball, of which the Princess was patroness, and as she entered the room on the arm of an old Baron W. (her usual chaperon), the young man went up to her and addressed her. She looked up in astonishment at him, with her innocent eyes, and said icily, "Who is that gentleman, I do not know him."

No one in society knew him either. The old Baron looked angrily at the intruder, and had opened his lips to utter some insulting remark, when the young man said quite loudly and clearly, "Good heavens, it is quite natural the princess does not recognise me, for she only saw me in *undress*."

There was a dreadful scandal. The young engineer left the ball at once, but the Princess felt her diadem totter, and one saw her no more in Nice.

I remember with pleasure another little episode. I had often heard the name of the Marquis du Pac, yet did not trouble much about him, as I did not know him.

One day Medora came to my room and exclaimed, "Oh, *do* come to the drawing-room, the old Marquis du Pac is there, he will amuse you!"

I went with her at once, and found a little old gentleman with a brown, somewhat old-fashioned wig, and corresponding costume, brown frock coat, vest and trousers—a little brown man, whom I supposed, in spite of his vivacity, to be about seventy years old. We were soon in animated conversation. The old gentleman related with wonderful dramatic power the story of an elopement in his youth, wherein post-chaises, postilions and disguised servants played a part. Then he exclaimed, "Ah, you poor things, how I pity you! If either of you wanted to be run off with to-day, why, the telegraph would be after you at once, and with the railway all romance has gone to the devil."

We laughed, and said he was right. He went on to tell us all sorts of stories about the great Catherine of Russia, Voltaire, and Frederick the Great of Prussia, which were so vivid and full of colour that I thought, "The old gentleman seems to know the memoirs of his time almost by heart."

I said then, "Marquis, you speak of Catherine as if you had known her."

"So I have," he replied. "How old do you think I am, child?"

"Well," I replied hesitatingly, "I fancied somewhere about seventy."

He laughed gleefully. "I am a hundred and two; a centenarian now kisses your hand! One who has known all these celebrities. From my twelfth year I was a page to Catherine; she sent me to Frederick the Great, and at his Court I saw Voltaire!"

Now I was really interested, and we chatted for a long time. When he had left, I was quite excited, and Medora told me a great deal about him, until a man-servant appeared and handed me a splendid basket of flowers, with a charming little poem entitled:

"L'Hiver au Printemps," written by the old Marquis in madrigal style.

I was so pleased, but I am sorry to say the little poem, like so many other things, has been lost. I know not how much longer he lived, but the following spring he fell ill, and all the world was already mourning the death of their petted old centenarian when, after a few weeks, he recovered, and appeared again wandering round the *jardin public*. Perhaps he is still alive! Who knows? Perhaps he had obtained the elixir of life from Cagliostro's own hand, but, as I said, I do not know!

Another famous personage played a great part in my life, the clever Jesuit preacher, Père L. Society ladies had arranged a special chapel for him, which, in its luxury, more resembled an elegant lady's boudoir than a church of God. People crowded to hear him preach, as his sermons were very convincing and treated largely of society problems.

I remember the titles of some of them—"Ennui" (boredom), "Flirting," and others, all addressed to the *mondaines*, all witty and tolerant, and permitting much, if not everything, provided faith in the Church and dependence on the clergy were maintained.

I raved with the others about the interesting priest and regularly attended his sermons. Mrs. Grymes and Medora were, as South Americans, and half Spaniards, very pious Catholics, and followed the Jesuits in blind admiration. I heard from Medora's own mouth that they reaped a great deal of benefit from them.

I visited the little church with Medora, and once I had to go there alone and listen to the pater's sermon. I remained seated longer than usual, as I kept apart from the crowd on account of my deep mourning. The chapel had emptied itself when the Monsignor stood next me. My face was buried in my hands, for I was deep in my sad thoughts.

Suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder, and his

beautifully trained voice, his chief instrument of conviction when preaching, said softly:

"May I disturb you, Princess? You always look so sad, I should be so glad to be able to help you in this difficult time."

I was as touched as I was grateful. He took me with him to his vestry, that was rather sombre, but luxuriously arranged, befitting a cabinet of confession for beautiful sinners who most certainly preferred unburdening their consciences here, rather than in the cold severe confessional. He spoke to me kindly, almost like a loving father, and my heart opened out towards him. I told him that which he certainly must have known a long time before, all my sorrows of the last years, and he consoled me in the gentlest manner.

Then some one tapped at the door. The priest said, "Come in," excusing himself at the same moment for doing this.

A tall handsome young man stood before us, remarkably like Lassalle, only darker, so that my heart almost stood still.

The priest introduced him as Prince S. di F., "a true son of the Church, and member of one of the oldest and most religious families of Sicily."

I stood up to go, but the clever priest engaged us both in such fascinating conversation, than an hour slipped away and I said in astonishment, "The luncheon hour at my friend's is long past. I must go home at once."

The priest laughed. "Well, Princess! anyhow you will arrive there too late! Be amiable and lunch with me. My young protégé here, Prince Carlo, intended in any case to stay with me. Keep us both company, will you?" That was just what I liked—an impromptu luncheon with the reverend father and this animated, handsome Sicilian! I stayed.

From that time, a peculiar friendship sprang up between the priest and myself, and a yet more

peculiar one with Prince Carlo. The latter had spoken to me at balls and soirées of the particular lady of his choice, a beautiful Countess Mathilde C. I teased him about her, whom I myself admired immensely. She was quite a different type from me, with her curly dark hair and Italian beauty, and I presumed she was the Prince's taste.

Prince Carlo often came to see us.

I sat one day with Medora on our big balcony: it was one of the heavenly Nice spring days in February. Prince S. di F. was announced, and hardly was he seated, when the beautiful Countess Mathilde rushed in exclaiming, "So, here I am again, without having been married! You all know that we, my sister and I, were taken on show to the Lake of Como. It was most ridiculous. The Polish Countess S., mamma's *intime*, had promised her to marry at least *one* of us this season. She had the Marchese di L. on hand, *honi soit qui mal y pense!* Well. We all went off to Lake Como to the Countess S.'s villa. We hardly had time to arrange ourselves —my sister's blond locks were still in disorder, which was more becoming to her than it would have been to me—when the 'Marchese' arrived. We were shown off! He looked at me, then at my sister, then again at me, and again at her, saying finally, 'La Biondina mi piace di più' (the fair one pleases me most). This was his verdict! She was the bride, and I am the forlorn one!"

Mathilde laughed aloud, showing all her white teeth. Prince Carlo turned and whispered to me as we leaned on the balcony railing, "Heavens! How vulgar she is!"

I looked at him in astonishment, but his burning eyes rested on me, and with slightly trembling voice he repeated smilingly, "La Biondina mi piace di più."

An exciting and strange time now began for me. The fiery courtship of the hot-blooded Sicilian pursued

me and surrounded me with a sultry, half-terrifying atmosphere. But I imagined myself safe because of my mourning and sorrow.

If this strange likeness to Lassalle had not existed I should not have been touched in the least by his passion, for in the rest of his personality there was nothing very attractive, in spite of his flattering amiability. Indeed, I was rather interested in a young German doctor (to-day a famous anatomical professor), who had bestowed care and help on my poor Yanko in his last days.

But the strange likeness drew me more and more towards the Prince. Yes, it fascinated me! My vanity also was flattered, for he was very spoilt in society and now withdrew himself from balls and festivals in order to devote himself to me and my amusement.

But I reproached myself for allowing any one but the dead to claim my thoughts.

Medora left Nice at this time to join one of her sons in Marseilles. I remained alone with Mrs. Grymes, otherwise, no doubt, I should have confided in Medora, who was much older than I. Her mother was just as odd in her ideas about the *convenances* as anything else, sometimes going too far in what she considered permissible, then again, over-rigorous in things that seemed innocent enough. Therefore it was no use confiding in her.

After a sleepless night, I resolved to tell all to my respected Jesuit, and to obey him in everything.

When I went to him he sat writing at his table, and looked up at me in the deepest astonishment, saying slowly, "Does God send you to me, my dear, dear daughter? I have been occupying myself with you most insistently for hours."

He took my hand, told me to sit beside him and continued, "Poor child! You are so young, so unprotected, exposed to every temptation, yet so beautiful and fascinating, besides being so sensual

and of such a tender disposition. What is to become of it all? Poor unhappy child!"

The tears came into my eyes. Unhappy indeed, that I was! But how did he know it all? It was this very thing that I had come here to tell him, to confess to him, and ask his advice.

For a time he was silent, then continued: "Yes, my dear child, the world is dreadful. An unprotected woman is exposed to calumny as a flower is to the bees. And you cannot marry again at once, either. I was thinking and wondering how we all can help you—you whom we love so much" (who the "*all*" were I did not know).

I listened to him, hung on his words! But now he was silent. At last I came out with my question: "What was I to do in regard to Prince Carlo?"

He looked at me in astonishment. "What? I know that he loves you," he said smiling, "but he fears that you do not reciprocate his feelings, for you repulse him so. Is he right, or dare I tell him anything to console him?"

"Ah, it is just that," I exclaimed; "I have a certain feeling for him—no love, but—I have been a widow for so short a time, I am afraid this is a sin?"

What now followed was the quintessence of Jesuitical morals that one could imagine. At that time it seemed to me the highest worldly wisdom.

"Ah, child. It is just that what I mean. You cannot go on like this; the world would soon talk, and that must be avoided. Everything is only so dreadful because you stand quite alone in the world. Your parents have behaved disgracefully to you. There is no protection to be found there. If you were but Catholic the case would be quite simple. We would take you into our care, as we have done in the case of your dear, beautiful friend, Mrs. W.—you know about it—then all would be easy. But you have just contemplated a change in your religion in wishing to become Greek Orthodox Catholic.

The death of your poor husband occurred before its consummation, so of course you will not care to go over immediately to our Church. I understand this. You care nothing, as you say, for the outward forms of religion. The Protestant faith can mean nothing to you, which is quite natural with such an artistic nature as yours; its very forms must repulse you.

He gave me no time to answer, but went on: "Do you see, my daughter, a love-affair with Prince Carlo would not matter. He is such a good, pious son of our Church, and is especially under the protection of the Society of Jesus. No one could consider it a sin on your part, I least of all, who hear such dreadful things in the confessional. However bad a sin may be, I have always heard a worse one. The short duration of your widowhood does not matter in the least; you are not created to live in abstinence, so a little sooner or later would be all the same. The main thing is to avoid scandal. Will you follow my advice implicitly?"

"I came here for that."

"Well, go now, in two days we will talk it over again."

I went, half glad to have shifted all responsibility on such clever shoulders, half worried as to what would happen later.

Next time, my adviser disclosed his plans still further.

It would not be difficult for me to give up the Protestant Church, and I could easily place myself under the protection of the Society of Jesus. The advantages that would accrue to me from this were too immense to be even imagined by me.

First of all absolute protection against all evil talk, for under the protection of such wise people, much might be carried out that would otherwise be impossible.

Erotic things were anyhow of no consequence. One could be a very eminent person, yet remain a

slave to one's senses, provided no one else suffered through it; as in the case of adultery or rape, pardon could easily be obtained. The chief thing was absolute obedience to the advice given one by the priests.

And to conclude, I had just seen during these last weeks how necessary good advice was. I had not hitherto belonged to his Church, nevertheless I had turned to him because in the Protestant Church there is no such medium for spiritual protection, which is so necessary for weak, erring man.

"Another thing must be considered in your case, my dear daughter," continued the priest. "You told me about the folly your father committed when he made no marriage contract for you, and as the Racowitzas leave you absolutely without means, you are entirely dependent on that which your own family will allow you in the way of money."

Here he smiled kindly, and took my hand. "Well, I have seen enough, my dear daughter, to show me that you have very expensive tastes, and if matters remain as they are, you will soon get into great difficulties. Under our protection you need fear nothing of all this. If you consider it advisable to arrange your life in Paris, Vienna, or St. Petersburg (you could choose where you would prefer to be), then unlimited means would be at your disposal, and you need deny yourself nothing in the way of luxury, and could have everything that passed through this pretty head of yours. . . . Now, adieu for to-day. I am busy, but the day after to-morrow I shall expect to see you about the same time."

Excited, delighted, and in the most exalted frame of mind, I reached my room.

It was natural that from the very first the priest had made absolute secrecy a condition of all we had talked about.

Prince Carlo must that day have received more favourable reports about his suit. Yet, strange to

say, it was only now and then that I felt attracted towards him—at other times he repulsed me.

On the third day, when I again went to Père L., I had almost made up my mind to say "yes" to his proposals.

Directly we met, he said impressively, "To-day we must arrive at a decision. Easter is approaching, and I must go to Rome to the Holy Father. Such a splendid opportunity for you will never occur again. I have already written to my friend, the abbess of one of the most elegant cloisters of Rome, to ask if you can at once be accepted there for retreat. You could travel at the end of this week, couldn't you?"

I nodded affirmatively.

Smiling once more, he said, "Prince Carlo must do penance at Easter, and when you come out of your retreat you will see him again."

I was obliged to laugh at this mixture of church and very worldly wisdom. My lightness of heart amused him, and, laughing also, he said, "See, we will arrange it like this. Everything can be managed if it is only cleverly and wisely done. Now, however, we must work. At Easter you must make your confession of faith to the holy fathers. This will be, at the same time, a revenge on your own father, who so brutally destroyed your life's happiness."

I hesitated for the first time since I had entered into the compact with the clever priest. If this last sentence had remained unuttered, who knows how my whole life would have been formed by him?

I gave no definite promise. Once more he painted to me all the glorious possibilities of my future, then I departed.

Henceforth we were to meet daily for serious religious instruction; but I returned home pensive, reflective, and disturbed, deep in doubt.

My love for my father had certainly been killed by his behaviour in the Lassalle affair; but to take *revenge* on him—I was not capable of this! This

one expression awakened in me all kinds of things that must be silent, if I had to serve the aims of the Jesuit.

In internal conflict, I drove to the churchyard to my Yanko's grave. There I saw clearly before me all I ought to do. It called aloud within me, "Away, away—far from temptation!"

Certainly the idea of the promised wealth attracted me, and the prospective power and social position. But I felt the temptation more as a tiresome burden which my whole freedom-loving nature could not bear, and must shake off. On the way homeward I telegraphed to a friend in Paris, asking her to send me a wire summoning me to her at once.

A few hours later, when I had this in hand, I told Thérèse to pack my trunk, bade farewell to Mrs. Grymes, thanking her for her kindness, and took the first express train to Paris, fleeing thus from the Jesuit's promises, yet inwardly trembling lest their ban and curse should reach me there.

Thus I arrived in Paris. There, as well as the friend of my youth already mentioned, I had another at Napoleon's Court — the Duc de Piennes, who occupied a high position in the service of the Empress Eugénie.

I wished to place myself under his especial protection. I could not find out the Duke's private address from my friend, Baroness Lucy K., and knew of no other means of getting it, except going direct to the Tuileries.

It was rather a mad idea, but it was successful. I inquired the way to the Empress's apartments from one sentinel to another. When I reached them, several chamberlains looked astonished, but admiring, and gave me the news that the Duke had gone out driving with the Empress, but I could write him a note, which one of them would be sure to give him. When I had mentioned my name, they expressed the hope that at the end of my mourning I would allow

myself to be introduced at Court, that in the Duc de Piennes I had just the right friend for all this, and that, therefore, they might all hope to see me again.

That very afternoon the Duke, who was an intimate friend of my parents, drove to see me, and at once expressed to me the warmest sympathy. He suggested introducing me to the Empress, and said that later he would make me a big position at Court. Then I told him the affair with my Jesuit, and a long, serious face was the result. The Duke, after various considerations, came to the conclusion that I was to remain hidden, so to say, in Paris for some weeks, and he would give the Emperor a hint that he, in case of need, could protect me against any act of vengeance on their part, but that absolutely nothing could be done with the Empress, who was a blind adherent of the Jesuits. The only really safe thing for me to do was to go to Berlin, and to place myself under the immediate protection of Bismarck.

Now I was really a little terrified, especially as De Piennes made me promise never to drive out without him. He always fetched me in a closed carriage, and looked after me most anxiously. Although I shortened my stay in Paris in consequence of this, I had nevertheless some very interesting times there.

Through the Duke, I learned to know the famous sculptor Carpeaux, and he at once begged to be allowed to model my bust. I sat for him for this, and thus had a glimpse of the most original artist life I had ever seen. (I may mention here that later on he used this model for his famous "Genius of Dancing" in the big group on the Paris Opera House; later on, it was ruined by zealots with ink, but now it is cleaned, and gleams there in pristine whiteness.)

Carpeaux, as I said, was very original. A little ugly man, almost deformed, with a wild head and

beard, he lived in his hideous atelier, and in a little room beneath it, in dreadful dirt and disorder. Withal, he loved luxury, beauty, and prosperity, and was enchanted with all the evidences of these when he visited me or the Duke.

When I asked him why he lived like this, in spite of his big income and fine tastes, he shrugged his shoulders and exclaimed, "Well, how could I manage otherwise? There are always many colleagues who are in need of money. There isn't enough for everything."

De Piennes once had a passing fancy to marry me to the great artist, but when I invited him to come and inspect the sleeping, living, and dining apartments of our honoured master, and the state of his combs, brushes, and washstand, it was sufficient to make him give up the idea once for all. Later on, Master Carpeaux married a very aristocratic lady, and eventually led a sensible existence—even a luxurious life.

Even now this atelier soon looked very different, for the famous painter Henner had asked me to sit for my picture, also Leroux, and several others whose names I have forgotten.

I declared they could all paint me, if they did it at Carpeaux's—while he modelled my bust.

They agreed to this, most of them wanting a sketch merely for my colouring, chiefly that of my hair, which I wore during the whole of my youth arranged in Greek curls.

It was very funny. Carpeaux declared the painters were much better off than he was, as they could give my colouring — the most characteristic thing about me, while old Henner wildly gesticulated with his palette and brush, and declared, "You don't know what you are talking about, Carpeaux. Those colours cannot possibly be reproduced in painting. To my idea, a painter has no advantage in trying to paint you, except that of seeing his own daubs and acknowledging his inefficiency. But a sculptor!

Ah, if I were that, I would bring the Greek — or is it Germanic — in short, Aryan race, to expression in its perfection and form! If you can't do it, then you are—well, just a mechanic, and no artist by the grace of God."

None of the pictures were really like me, and my very witty friend, Baroness R., declared when she was once admitted to see them, "The atelier looks like a well-kept kitchen, with paintings of all sorts of copper kettles, but not once the head of my Helene!"

Carpeaux's bust alone found favour.

With him, the Duke, and the good but coarse old Henner, I often visited the galleries, and of course by preference the Louvre. Here among the greatest old masters, and in company of my new ones, I laid the foundation to my comprehension of art that later on enabled me in America to work as art critic for the great newspapers.

Therefore, I owe to this episode much that was beautiful and instructive.

CHAPTER XXVII

As already stated, in spite of such pleasant hours, I did not feel myself safe in Paris from the revenge of the Jesuits, and preferred going to Berlin. Here I did not remain long, but foolishly followed the request of my mother, who wrote a long letter full of phrases persuading me to return to my parents' roof—a plan that ended most disastrously, and led to a breach with the entire family that never was healed.

During my stay of several weeks in my parents' house, two events occurred of interest to me. One was my acquaintanceship that later ripened into friendship with Franz von Lenbach. It arose from the fact of his wishing to paint me for the Schack Museum.

It happened that Schack was a very intimate friend of my father's, and had confided to my mother that he felt very lonely in his big beautiful house. She at once got it into her head to marry me to him. We were often brought together. I thought him awful. But as usual this was of no consequence. The affair went on without my being considered.

The Count was a very amiable, highly educated man, critic, artist, poet, and collector, as all the world knows by his literary works and his famous gallery in Munich. In my eyes, he was old and ugly as Don Quixote, stammering and often ridiculous, and it was an absolute impossibility for me to contemplate him as a husband.

He ordered my picture to be painted by Lenbach, and I sat a few times for it. Then came the final

catastrophe with my parents, which arose from the fact that, for political reasons directed against my father, the whole of the Lassalle affair was dished up again. Fearing scenes, I preferred to leave the parents' roof and Munich before they occurred, and returned once more to Berlin—this time with the firm resolution of going on the stage.

I had heard nothing more of the Jesuits. In Germany there was no field for them and their machinations.

For some time I devoted myself to my dramatic studies, became friends with some of the most admired and honoured artists, also with the General Intendant von Hülsen, who assisted me in every way in my first efforts.

A funny episode is connected with those theatre days. My friends suggested that I should appear at supper at our witty friend's, Frau Grua, in various wigs—successively blond, black, and white, in order to judge how I looked without my own hair. I chose first a lovely fair one, and looked a little faded in it, but very young. At midnight my maid fetched me, and I left the hospitable house earlier than the others, as I was a little tired. It was a clear mild night, and I preferred going on foot, as I did always in such fine weather.

We had only gone a few steps, when a very elegant young man emerged from a dark corner into the light and said to me in broken English-German, "Madam, I have waited in vain for you all the evening. At last you have come!"

I looked at him in amazement and a little terrified, and stepping back said, "Sir, I must beg you to go. I make no acquaintances in the street."

Then my maid came and explained.

"Directly Madam left this evening, this gentleman came with Baron W. and did not go away, but said he was going to marry you, and so he waited till you returned."

This was too much for me, especially as the stranger added, "Yes, yes!"

Baron W. was a rather good friend of mine, whom I considered a very sensible person, so I understood the situation less and less.

"What is the meaning of all this nonsense?" I exclaimed in indignation, but my stranger continued calmly, "Yes, yes! Baron W. is my brother-in-law. I am Lord B. I saw a most beautiful coloured picture of you in England, and I said to myself, 'I will marry this woman with the golden hair. I have plenty of the other kind of gold to lay at her feet—and——'"

Suddenly the comic side of the situation made me burst out laughing; I threw my head back and said mockingly, "What do you mean?—I have fair hair." He looked at my hair in the light of the gas-lamp, hesitated, and said, "But you are Helene Racowitza?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Well, then, it does not matter; I will marry you all the same."

"But I won't marry you. You are a madman," was my indignant reply.

He did not let himself be disturbed in the least, but told me he was very rich and could fulfil every one of my wishes (he was handsome, too, with true racial English beauty). I should have to decide quickly, as he only had thirty-six hours' leave. He was an officer in Her Majesty's Horse Guards.

"You can be what you like," I exclaimed, "but leave me in peace. I want no madman, and I don't mean to marry any one. I am going on the stage."

"Very well, if you like acting so much (we spoke English), I will have a private theatre built for you, and you can play before the best English society as much as you like."

"No! I will not. I want you to leave me in peace."

"I will marry you all the same," he declared, much to my indignation.

We had reached my door, and he said, "To-morrow at ten o'clock I shall be here again, for I have very little time." I had the door shut in his face, and scolded my maid for having let him in at all. Nothing was to be done now. Next morning I drove quite early to a friend, Baroness B., and said that I would not be home all day. I heard later that Lord B. came punctually at 10 o'clock, and, after liberally bribing my servants, sat himself comfortably down at home in order to study my tastes.

As my maid did not know where I had gone to, he at least could not follow me.

But one cannot escape one's fate! At Baron B.'s there was a young Englishman of good family *en pension*, learning German. He was to dine at six at the British Ambassador's, and we had all agreed to meet later in a box at the Victoria Theatre.

After the first act, the box door opened, and there entered Lord S. with my tormentor Lord B.

"This is fate," he exclaimed joyfully, when he saw my puzzled face. "This is how it happened. Fred here is a cousin of mine. We met at dinner at the Embassy, and at dessert he took out the latest photograph of you and showed it. Well, you can imagine that I pumped him at once as to whether he knew you, where you were, etc. Well! here we are, and I shall marry you!"

Angry as I was, I was obliged to laugh at his cool persistence. Lord S. explained to me that my courtier was all he professed to be, and advised me to consider the matter seriously. But I remained firm.

My "madman," as we all called him, raved more than ever on seeing my red-gold hair, as he thought it even more beautiful than he had imagined. He continually worried me to say "yes," for now he had only a few more hours. I answered nothing but, "You are mad, and I won't marry a madman."

Next morning Baron W. was announced, and he asked me seriously why I would not accept his brother-in-law.

"Surely you cannot take such nonsense seriously," I said; "I am not a woman to be disposed of in this forcible manner. I am the one to choose. Maybe I am losing the best chance of my life, but I have hitherto never allowed myself to be influenced by material reasons. I feel nothing for your mad, obstinate relation, and—I am going on the stage; therefore leave me in peace," Once more Lord B. tried to persuade me, and then this episode was over.

Others soon followed. In the midst of my studies there arrived a letter signed H. v. B.—Colonel on the General Staff. It asked whether I would allow the writer to visit me on important business.

At that time every post brought me quantities of letters from men—each upon some different pretext—wishing to make my acquaintance.

In all these epistles the reason was so palpable that I laughed at them with my intimate friends, among whom was an amiable young aunt of mine.

Therefore, in spite of the illustrious signature, I was somewhat suspicious, and sought counsel with one of my uncles—the husband of the little aunt already mentioned. She thought I ought to hear what this gentleman had to say, and so it was!

A very ugly, elderly man came, but he was pleasant, witty, clever, well-mannered—indeed one of the most interesting men I have ever met. Notwithstanding his ugliness, he looked very imposing in his full-dress uniform. He expressed his pleasure at my permitting him to make his acquaintance, and conversation turned upon all kinds of things, until at last I asked:

"But, Colonel, what was it that you so particularly wished to tell me?"

He hesitated, became slightly confused, and stammered out the following:

"Yes, in fact I come for some one else, and Bismarck thought I ought to try and find out whether 'La belle Hélène' is a good patriot."

I had to laugh, but as I had no idea what he meant, I replied, "Oh, no! I am much too cosmopolitan, and really hardly know in what direction I ought to be patriotic, whether towards Bavaria or Turkey—for you must know that, as a Wallachian widow, I am a Turkish subject. One might say of me the same as of the 'Mädchen aus der Fremde' —'one does not know whence she came.'"

"Well," replied Herr von B., "you are really German. Could you not feel enthusiastic about German politics?"

"No doubt in a fugitive sort of way. But why? I intend becoming an artiste, and they need not trouble themselves about politics and the interests of their country."

"But if you render your fatherland great services?"

"Which fatherland? Turkey?"

"No, Germany, of course! The fatherland of the man whom you loved—of Lassalle."

"Certainly I should be pleased to, but how can I, an ignorant woman?"

"Not so ignorant as all that; you are so clever and witty."

"I? Clever? I? If I only were, I should not have made such a mess of my life. No, certainly I am not clever!"

"Other causes led to this, chiefly because you are without protection, almost without means, and exposed to the world's criticism. If you but decided to render your fatherland certain services, it would put great means at your disposal—above all, power and social position with great influence. Consider whether you would not like this."

We had discussed this laughingly—almost jokingly, but now I said, "Do you know, Baron, that only a few months ago I received an almost identical

proposition from another source. Do you mean simply that you wish to make me a political spy?"

"How can you use such a horrid word? The question is——"

"Yes, yes—of services I am to render the fatherland. The German for this is 'spy,' or *political agent*, just as the other would have been Jesuitical agent. My goodness, Colonel! I do not exactly say 'no'! My life is so *manquée* that a little more or less can't matter much; but one thing I can tell you, and that is, that I am not in any way fitted for such a thing."

"Why?—with your beauty, your mind, the name you bear?"

"Yes! The name I bear! If it had not been for my fanatical love of truth; if I had not told my mother everything when I returned that time from the Rigi; if I had only understood how to lie, or even how to be silent, then perhaps to-day I should be bearing the name of Lassalle, two noble creatures would still be alive, and——"

Tears were near and the old gentleman bent over my hand and went away with the words, "I honour you deeply for this glimpse of your soul. Permit me to come again; we can talk of all this later."

Baron von B.'s next visit was a more hearty and friendly one. He tried to tempt me with his forecast of a great political future. He left me the choice between Petersburg and Paris. I had to laugh again. He was offering me the same allurements as all the others!

"Well!" he continued, "let us suggest Paris, with accounts at the best dressmakers, modistes—in short, everything that can charm a woman's heart."

"But what if *this* woman's heart should be enthralled most by Napoleon?" I replied. "You know in his strange coldness he has already been dangerous to many a pretty woman. In that case, I should throw over your bald-headed Bismarck with all his state arts and crafts—and——"

"Be quiet! You make me shudder at the thought," he exclaimed. "Come! let us look at the difficult task of deciphering. Surely that interests you?"

"Yes, it does."

He had brought me several of the cipher systems then in vogue. I studied them industriously, but after a time the whole thing seemed so unsuited to me, that I declared I had had enough of it all. We could remain good friends, Colonel von B. and I, but we would bury the idea of political spying.

When I had sworn this most solemnly, one day Herr von B. brought me a large sheet of paper and said, "Now, just guess what this is!"

"Of course," I answered teasingly, "my spy diploma, drawn up by the hand of the great Bismarck himself."

He laughed at this. "Not so very wrong," he exclaimed. "It is the report that I sent in to Bismarck of my impressions of you, you magician, after our first meeting."

"Oh! How nice! I am so curious. Read, read!"

"Not a bit of it! But you may read what Bismarck wrote under it with his famous giant pencil. By showing you this, I place myself and my political reputation in your little hands."

"Well?"

Silently, smilingly, he passed me the paper.

I read in the powerful man's large handwriting the following—that is to say, the sense, for I do not exactly recall the words:

"Very good! but it is the report of a *Primaner* in love, not that of a serious officer of the general staff.—Von B."

We both laughed heartily, and Herr von B. utilised these "confidences" to become himself very "confidential" during the time our friendship lasted. It was only when he wished to overstep this, that I was unfortunately compelled to break off relations with

my clever but ugly friend. With the best of intentions, my keen sense of beauty did not allow me to contemplate him as a lover.

But I shall always remember him with gratitude and affection, for he was kind and self-sacrificing to me.

In those days I visited the interesting houses of Spielhagen, Auerbach, and J. Rodenberg, as indeed did every one belonging to the literary circle of Berlin. But so many others have described these, that I could tell but little new of them.

It was a lively, interesting time for those who stood in the midst of it all; but the works and doings of those whom we then admired as the great ones are now looked upon so slightingly by the "moderns" that it is hardly worth while talking about them.

A glimpse of that time may perhaps be given by reading a letter that I only received later, but one which has kept the "perfume" of 1867-68.

It is from Wilhelmina v. Hillern, the well-known authoress of *And yet she comes*, and other novels, and is dated Oberammergau, 1894:

I remember still with deep interest the soirée at Auerbach's in the year '66 or '67, when I first knew you, though you did not know me. At that time there was nothing about me that could have attracted your attention—not even a name. But I never could forget you. You were wearing a golden peacock in your red-gold hair; you looked altogether like molten gold, a mingling of metal and ivory, and the flames from which you were poured into the glorious mould played still around you, breathing their glow upon your cheeks!

"That is Helene von Dönniges," said Oppenheim softly to me. "Ah," I said, and understood all. You then had no idea how deeply your image was reflected in two silent, observing eyes, and how firmly these held it! Beauty is a parable in art, but an event in life. One does not forget it.

W. v. Hillern.

This poetic letter shows how admiration could be

unmixed with envy in those days, and what an æsthetic tone prevailed in the salons. During my stay in Berlin I made the acquaintance, and later on the faithful friendship, of Paul Lindau. It began in the most amusing way. In the salon there appeared monthly striking and amusing "Letters of a small German Burgher." No one was able to discover who was hidden behind this pseudonym. But I watched with the same anticipation as did all those of any literary interests for the regular appearance of this sharply critical and splendidly satirical letter.

A great press fête drew near. It began by a *première* of Spielhagen, and was to end with a big supper.

I got to the theatre rather early and took my place in the somewhat dark *parquetloge* of the Royal Theatre. Two gentlemen entered the same box, and seated themselves behind me. Before us the public was streaming into the stalls.

A fusillade of jokes about the people coming in came from one of my neighbours. I listened, intensely amused, for some time, when suddenly one of his remarks made me jump at the conclusion that caused me to exclaim:

"You are the German *Kleinstädter*!"

"And you are Helene von Dönniges," was the reply.

"Certainly, but what is your name, you witty *Kleinstädter*?"

"My friends call me Paul Lindau."

We chatted the whole evening, and later on, when he had to return to Leipzig, where he lived, entered into a most active correspondence. Finally this developed into a friendship which lasts unchanged to this very day.

My chief occupation was in preparing for the stage. In the kindest way Herr von Hülsen had allowed me to attend all the rehearsals at the Royal Theatre, as he thought, and rightly, that this was of

more use than any amount of dramatic instruction. Although I studied hard in other ways, the rehearsals were of the greatest interest to me.

Through them I got more closely acquainted with all the stage celebrities, and among them with the then quite young and most promising Siegwart Friedmann. His personal appearance and delightful acting soon captured my fancy. A sympathy grew up between us which we tried to seal with—as we then thought—our marriage in the year 1868. The strange expression, "as we thought," has reference to the following.

As a Hungarian, Siegwart Friedmann was an *Austrian* subject. I, as a Rumanian, was under Turkish suzerainty. In neither of these countries to which we belonged did civil marriage exist, and yet the Berlin registry office united us without publishing our banns. They did not trouble further, and considered me as the daughter of the Bavarian Minister and him a Prussian Court actor.

Thus we considered ourselves married *de facto*, and lived for five years happily together. We loved each other dearly, and are even to-day the best of friends. I admired his frankness and openness, and he took care of me so tenderly that in the real sense of the word he "bore me upon his hands."

Under his direction I made my first appearance on the stage in Schwerin in the grand ducal Theatre Royal. I played with him in *Maria Stuart*, he being Burleigh, then in *Countess Orsina*, he being Marinelli, and in many other plays. We went on tour together and celebrated mutual triumphs, emulating each other, rejoicing in each other, happy in each other's successes.

This curious being, after leaving the stage for eighteen years, felt impelled to return to it when nearly seventy, and has still a great success. The critics and public still praise his youthful appearance

and diction and his charming manner, and places him still on the highest pinnacle of art.

From Schwerin we went to Berlin, then to Vienna, where we spent two happy years under Heinrich Laube's direction.

If to-day we were to ask each other, now that we are old people and yet good friends, why we then parted, I fancy that neither of us would find a plausible reason. It was mere folly—like much in life—that one day we resolved to part. Most likely it was our fate.

We were not to find peace in this union, nor with ourselves.

Now I recall the events of my life so clearly, I view them as absolutely necessary to the eventful "being"; so that I only smile sadly at those far-away days—but never in anger.

Now something peculiar happened. When we got to the lawyer's he said to us shortly that we could not be divorced, as, according to the laws of the countries we belonged to, we had never been married! We were petrified! To make a long story short, we tried in every conceivable way to have our marriage legitimised, although we wished to dissolve it, but all officials declared the same thing to us: we had not been married. We could consider ourselves fortunate that we had no children, as they would have been illegitimate.

Anyhow, it did not matter. We should have no bother about separating.

I had to take the name of my first husband, Racowitza, and kept it henceforth as my stage name, and use it to-day as my pseudonym.

We had no peace until we received from the highest quarters the declaration that "Herr and Frau Friedmann's marriage, having been solemnised as such, was nevertheless in the circumstances to be regarded as not having taken place, so no divorce could be granted."

We were quite merry over it, and at a luncheon party with Lenbach and Hans Makart (of whom I shall speak by and by) we celebrated our bond of freedom that was transformed into a hearty friendship. This, throughout the thirty-three years that have since elapsed, has remained as staunch as ever. Indeed, this now comprises the friendship of our respective husband and wife, and I have hardly a friend I care for more than for the clever, pleasant wife of Siegwart Friedmann.

How true a friend he proved to my husband will be shown in the course of the events I shall relate.

CHAPTER XXVIII

I MUST mention the fact that I was again alone, and, beyond what I earned at the theatre, absolutely penniless.

I have not yet mentioned one of my peculiarities, namely, my incapacity for seeking money or material help from others. To illustrate this let me quote the opinion of Siegmund Schlesinger, when my book, *My Relations to Ferdinand Lassalle*, appeared.

What he wrote of me will illustrate this better than I could describe.

He entitled his article, "It is I," because I once wrote this dedication under a photograph I gave him. Schlesinger wrote of this picture:

> The fairylike gleam of the golden hair is wanting in the monotony of the photographic tones, and without it we lose the real characteristic of this fateful beauty. "You have made enough noise in the world," a Berlin friend once said to her; "but you might have made three times as much and not been so calumniated if, instead of this provoking colour, you had had dark hair."
>
> This golden gleam, as I said, does not show in the picture, yet the photograph reveals the unaltered cast of its impress. The proud forehead, the finely cut, delicate, aquiline nose, the nervous, clever and energetic mouth, which is a shade farther than need be from the nose, thus enhancing the expression of sharp decision that bids defiance to the world, whilst the eye combines both melancholy and tenderness.
>
> The term "interesting," which has so often been misapplied, should have been invented—if not already existing—to describe this charming woman, whose stature is that of an Amazon of the drawing-room (may this daring combination of words pass

the censor of good taste!). She is the embodiment of the device—"It is I."

The pose of this proud figure with the fearless face seems to cry out to the world, "I am my *own* world, and I make my own laws." Thus it stands in the picture, with the arms close to the sides as if in self-depreciation, the hands crossed and suggesting modest, almost housewifely simplicity. Even this too is characteristic, for the most bizarre contrasts are here in the mingled qualities bestowed by good and bad fairies; full of the most enduring will-power, and the most inconsistent weakness; revolting iciness of heart, and childlike softness—impulses that lead to the inevitable need of wealth, combined with luxurious tastes; and withal the total impossibility of so-called "making money" or of making use of any one. I myself know of a long conversation she once had with a well-known millionaire, who was always ready for even quite platonic monetary sacrifices for ladies of the theatre, and easily induced to such. She had entered upon conversation with very keen prospects of help, for at this time she was much tormented by creditors; but the interview ended without result, because she had no talent for using the necessary hints as regarded money matters. She carried inconsistency to a systematic perfection in love, yet had a changeless consistency in friendship, a freedom in conversation, easily developing to cynicism—knowing no bounds, hesitating before no subject of discussion; yet supremely sensitive, and full of womanly tact and dignity. In men's society she could be carried away to the extent of telling stories at which the most masculine natures would be horrified. But she told them all with a sort of Boccaccio-like *naïveté*, not understanding that certain things could not be discussed; nor could she imagine that conversation should hang fire from any prudish considerations. But if she saw that some one, for the sake of piquancy or frivolity, purposely directed the talk towards doubtful or lascivious subjects, the opposition of femininity was raised within her, and she was capable of breaking off the conversation shortly and sharply, and of giving the badly "inspired" man to understand that she wished to be free from his society.

Toward her own sex, she upheld womanly dignity in a masterly way. With women she had the quiet firmness, the noble absence of self, that characterises the sensible housewife and the *grande dame*.

This was proved in my own house. I came home one day, and my wife said to me, "Helene Friedmann has been here. She tried to find you at the Editor's office, and as you had already

left, she came here and asked if she might speak to me. I was almost afraid of this visit, for, after all, I had heard a great deal about her, and imagined her to be eccentric and odd; but in my heart I have begged her pardon. I found her most pleasant and natural, with charming manners, and quiet, practical points of view. I chatted long and pleasantly with her on housewifely topics."

This same woman told me, a few days later, that Makart had begged her to sit to him as a bacchante; that she really was doing it, that the day before, in the midst of painting her, he stopped short and turning to her, suddenly hurled this remark at her, "But just tell me something of the *real* bacchantes in ancient Greece, for you have sprung from there into our own time."

The memory of Lassalle has remained the only real great one, and at the same time (herein lies the tragic peculiarity of her destiny) the saddest moment of her life. Apparently she has long since got over it. She speaks with seemingly objective quietness about it, but a sympathetic eye cannot be mistaken in seeing that she revels in a sort of voluptuousness of suffering, when she speaks of the evanescent delights of the Lassalle days. They were two of the most wonderful hours of my life when she first told me of this affair, in her little room on the third story of the house in the Victoria Gasse, which was charmingly arranged with a certain amount of imagination, yet without eccentricity, and where for the time being she had pitched her tent.

More than once, when thinking of these hours and of her story, my hand has itched to grasp the pen and transcribe all I had heard; but I had no right to do this, nor to give lightly to the world her most secret thoughts and feelings. Now she has done it herself, and whoever delights in reading descriptions of the perplexities, the curious inconsistencies and impulses of the human soul, let him turn with interest and expectancy to this tragedy of two singular beings, who were destroyed by the attraction that drew one to the other.

The picture here is no ordinary portrait, and it cannot leave one indifferent. The woman has written beneath it her own designation of herself in the defiant yet inexpressibly melancholy device: *It is I.* SIEGMUND SCHLESINGER.

In connection with these extracts, I should like to make two remarks. Firstly, that I smile at the mention of my *iciness of heart.* This has assuredly never been remarked by any one who lived in my

proximity, but rather the contrary—an extreme tenderness of disposition. Men certainly have reproached me with it, when finding no response to their so-called "love," even after years of wooing. When I laughingly said, "I cannot love everybody," I generally received the reply, "But you ought to love *me*, as I have loved you for so long, and have proved my fidelity."

I must mention now a peculiarity of my nature which is perhaps a little unfeminine. I was never won, or moved in the least, by perseverance or persistent proofs of love in another—hence perhaps the "iciness of heart."

One of the "persevering ones" once took it into his head to follow me wherever my numerous theatrical tours called me. He crowned his follies by flying one night into the express train between Königsberg and Posen, and appearing at the door of my compartment. I was certainly astonished, but he had to retire with a long face. In the morning I gave him to understand seriously that these follies must end. They would lead to nothing, and even if he continued them for years, he could only provoke annoyance in me, but never love. "Whom I love," I said finally, "has no need to behave so desperately. He soon knows it, for I myself choose, and let myself neither be chosen nor conquered."

He went away and talked of my iciness of heart!

In the second place I will touch upon Siegmund Schlesinger's allusion to my chronic inability to keep myself free from money troubles.

This peculiarity of mine caused me then, and in later years, many difficult moments. Whoever knows Vienna, or any other great city, and the need of luxury, and the demands placed on the ladies of the theatre, can well imagine that a young woman admired as I was, and with a salary and royalty that amounted at most to 12,000 gulden (about £1200) a year, could not possibly manage to live on it.

Often when I was in pressing debt I was reproached for not having secured a certain income on separating with Friedmann, especially as we parted on friendly terms, and for no especial reason. But I could not do this; he did not offer it to me, so I did not suggest it, and remained merely with my pay and the little income allowed me by my uncle, my tours being remunerated sometimes more and sometimes less.

I mention all this in detail, that my position at the time may be understood, and I had many desperate difficulties. I had friends enough, and even more admirers, but helpers—not a single one.

As excuse for those not ready to help, be it said that perhaps they did not know my real position. I was too proud to speak, and they no doubt were too indifferent to ask, in spite of all protestations to the contrary. But my chief reason for dwelling upon it is this: my enemies have said of me that I was influenced by material advantages, and gave my favours for value received.

The above is my answer.

I have often, and with full consciousness, acted in defiance of the moral laws of the world; but I have always taken the consequences upon myself without hesitation. It was a favourite device of my life: "Il faut avoir le courage de son opinion!"—not only indeed to have the courage of one's conviction, but the courage to bear the consequences of one's actions.

My conviction was, as I have often emphasised in these memoirs—the equal rights in love of the free woman with those of the man, provided no regard need be taken for wife or child. This changes everything in my eyes, as then there is a holier, higher duty than the one towards one's self.

The "bearing of consequences" I carried so far, that when by going on the stage I stepped out of the society in which my birth and my first marriage

had placed me, I broke off all connections that bound me to it.

I visited none of my former women friends of the social world except those who proved to me that they wished to continue to associate with me. Then I welcomed them with all my heart.

Later in life, when my life again took a regular course, many of these returned to me; and they prove their faithful friendship and liking to this day.

At that time I stood alone in the world, deserted by all (the aunt I mentioned before, and of whom I was so fond, died young—in 1870). No doubt none of those who lived so happily and without care realised what a helping hand would have meant to me then. Fate had never cast them out of their natural surroundings, and they could never understand it.

A word, a warm hand-pressure at the right moment, may alter — nay, perhaps even save — a human soul!

But the hand was not proffered, and the word remained unspoken!

Thus it seems to me comprehensible — now when I stand high and free above all my doings of those days—that a being with such a necessity for love and tenderness, with such hunger for happiness, with such a sunny, light heart, should become "that heart-seeker" I was so often termed by my more intimate friends. When they inquired about a cast-off lover they asked, "Is he too not the right one? Are you still seeking? *Herzenssucherin!*"

Yes, I was looking for love, or, better still, for that being to whom once and for all I could entirely devote my love, and whom I could fully understand, as he me; but this I did not find. That blessed time was still far away; here the storm still raged, tossing me from one hope to another; always seeking, yet *au fond* miserable, because unsatisfied.

I drove on through the world, where others of

tamer temperament and more easily satisfied would have withdrawn to their corner in silent resignation. But it was not my lot to enjoy secluded happiness; rather to fight with the elements, weather the storm, but at last to reach the warmth, the light, the sun! At present I stood in the midst of it all, in the fury of the hurricane.

But to go back, as these memoirs demand—courageously back to that wild time when certainly the old Viking blood in me gained the upper hand.

Thus I must relate how I now exercised my love of truth with a certain brutality. I told every man who sought to find favour with me that probably my love would not be of long duration, because faithfulness did not lie in my nature, and he would hardly prove to be the long-sought one, capable of awakening this virtue within me! I must, however, add that I never met a man, young or old, foreigner or German, who abandoned his suit on account of this warning. I may go even farther and declare that no man ever became my enemy in consequence of this confession, so that I really believed that it had been my privilege to know only great souls, who knew how to love, because they understood and respected the truth.

A reason for this may have been, that one generally finds in people that which one presupposes in them. A man may show to various friends very different sides of his character; with the absolutely sincere, he will be the same, because, it may be unconsciously, he is ashamed to exhibit the want of truth that predominates in him at other times. Another man may show himself at times a sensualist, yet where he knows that this will be regarded as repulsive, he will, without hypocrisy, betray his better self.

I think I drew out the best side of my friends' characters by looking upon them as chosen beings; they hardly dared to disturb the illusion which was

so flattering to themselves. Thus they all remained my friends in spite of, or maybe *because* of, my love of truth, which I therefore have every reason to bless.

A friend once testified to it in this way: "Vous êtes le gentilhomme le plus loyal que j'ai rencontré de ma vie." (You are the most perfect *gentleman* I have met in all my life.)

After all this explanation, which arose from a certain necessity of the soul, let me return to my days in Vienna, and to my many interesting experiences there.

As already stated, Franz von Lenbach was there, and was painting the Emperor and many notabilities in society when I renewed the friendship with him which had begun in Munich.

One day he said to me, "Makart wants to know you, but the shy creature never pays a visit."

"Well, then, bring him one evening with you to the Café Walch, where we all meet so often after the theatre."

"Very well, to-morrow."

We "all" consisted of a most interesting group of artists, musicians, and poets, among whom were Adolf Sonnenthal, Hartmann, and my best friend and former husband, Siegwart Friedmann. Among the ladies were Auguste Baudius, Toni Hiller (the clever daughter of the musical composer Ferdinand Hiller), Charlotte Wolter and I. When our work at the various theatres was over, we generally met for supper in one of the hotels near by, and had tea or coffee afterwards in the Café Walch. Our little circle was most animated; the latest poems were discussed from the dramatic as well as the lyrical side; various interpretations of rôles were talked over, the newest pictures criticised—in short, all sorts of people and things were discussed, and everybody was interested in everything. On this particular evening Lenbach came, accompanied by the famous

Hans Makart, a little man in a black velvet coat, knickerbockers, high boots, and with a tremendous mane of hair. He led him straight up to me, and after a few gracious words on my part, which Makart with his well-known taciturnity scarcely answered, he asked me with his soft sympathetic voice, "Will you sacrifice yourself, and let me paint you once?"

"Of course, I shall be delighted," I replied. "Any one would like to be painted by Hans Makart."

"You didn't always say that," he said reproachfully.

"What do you mean? Have you ever asked me before?"

"Certainly, in the winter of 1864-65, in Munich, at night."

Suddenly a memory flashed through my brain, and I exclaimed in astonishment, "Was it you—that absolutely mad creature in the night?"

"Yes, I was the madman! At that time I was an unknown young fellow with no name; but I felt —'if you could paint that head, you would become famous at one stroke.' I knew I should be able to! Yes, it is just eight years ago."

"No! How extraordinary—that was you?" I repeated, and the picture of that night rose before me: the Court Theatre in Munich where I sat in the dress circle with my brother-in-law and Countess K. Opposite us, down below, stood a dark young man, whose gleaming eyes were fixed persistently on me. I took notice of it. We then went to a restaurant to sup; the young man went too. He sat at a table near us, and continued staring at me. At last this began to annoy me; my brother-in-law noticed it also, and said, "I shall have to give this young savage a lesson!" But we only laughed and tried to calm him. Soon after that we left.

At that time the streets of Munich were very badly lighted, and I was walking home a little in

advance of the others, when suddenly the wild-looking young man rushed towards me, exclaiming, "Oh, Fräulein, I would like to paint you!" I screamed with fright. My brother-in-law rushed forward, my sister-in-law and I went on quickly, whilst the men remained behind in discussion. Then Count K. came towards us laughing and said, "Oh, it's nothing, only a mad painter. I've settled him."

This "mad, settled" painter was Hans Makart.

He was sitting next me now, and was anything but "settled." We both of us laughed over the reminiscence, and Makart continued: "Yes, I would have given a great deal at that time to paint you, but your brother-in-law immediately challenged me to a duel. I ask you, do I look like a duellist? I went away then with a very heavy heart, but never mind, we will paint now instead."

We forthwith arranged a day when I could go to his delightful atelier. I only made one condition, which was, that nobody should know anything about it until the picture was finished, because I was so pestered by the Vienna artists for sittings. I often told them jokingly, when I refused them, that if I gave way to their requests, I should be wandering from morning till night from studio to studio, with a basket of provisions on my arm. But it was a different thing with Makart.

A most interesting time now began for me, for the silent Makart was not at all so silent when one got him alone and on his favourite themes, paintings and art. His instinct for colour was most remarkable. I remember a discussion between him and several other painters about the exact shade of colour in the draperies of the Belle di Tiziano. They made several sketches, and Makart said quietly, "No, it is not *exactly* that—here are the right colours!" and taking a bit of canvas, he painted the precise shades in thick strokes. They then went in a body and stood before the beautiful copy of the Florentine original, and the

colours dashed in by Makart were so exact that they could have been mistaken for the original ones.

He explained to me later, when we were alone, "It is because I see colours with my soul."

At that time I sat to him for all sorts of subjects, whatever he fancied—sometimes as a Greek bacchante, sometimes as a figure in one of his big pictures, sometimes as a Venetian Dogaressa; in fact, something new continually grew under his brush. None of the pictures were really portraits of me, least of all the one he intended as such. It became a sort of rage with him to paint me. He designed the most exquisite patterns for materials which he had caused to be woven in Lyons, and the garments made out of these formed the pretext for a new sitting.

One thing frequently happened in this little intimate circle of ours—we were all very often short of money, especially as we were all people with rather luxurious tastes. Hans Makart, with his large, warm heart, possessed in his famous atelier a small, beautifully carved, old Italian cabinet. In this there always lay some loose money — sometimes more, sometimes less. It was the "comrades' money," as Hans called it, and was common property. Whoever needed money went to this little cabinet, peeped in, and if it were "high tide" he took what he wanted. If, however, it were "low tide" he turned with a long face towards the master, saying, "Oh, dear me! Nothing, or hardly anything!" Then Hans called out gaily: "Never mind, Helene must be painted again; the art dealers buy all my Venetian ladies, and studies of heads, wet from the easel; so I'll paint to-morrow, and the day after we will all float again."

Then every one laughed, the costume was talked over, and I sat again for every one's benefit!

During one of the discussions on costumes, a most comical thing occurred.

I must mention that Makart, when he arranged

his famous atelier with palms, and a hidden boudoir surrounded with mirrors, made a second atelier next his own for his closest friend, Franz Lenbach. Lenbach was only separated from him, and in this case from us too, by a partition. I was sitting for a Venetian Dogaressa in a gorgeous costume. The gown, which was in accordance with the style of the period, was made of gold brocade with scarlet and sea-green velvet. Above my long flowing hair, I wore the little Dogaressa's cap and crown. Makart was in ecstasy over his sketch, and painted silently and industriously. Suddenly Lenbach threw the door open and called out, "Hans, leave off! Liszt, the Countess Dönhoff, and a number of others are in here with me, and are coming on to you."

"No, I won't! I have no time! I want to work!," called out Makart exasperatedly.

"You can't help it; they are coming!" and the vivacious Lenbach rushed off. Master Hans stood there like a real "Hans" (bumpkin), quite taken aback, and not knowing what to do with me. It would never do for me to run upstairs, because, as he said angrily, they would be sure to go up there too, and "sniff" at everything! I found a way out of it. The big atelier window came down to within two yards of the floor; beneath it there was a pitch-dark niche, beautifully and luxuriously arranged, but so hidden with palms and "Makart arrangements" that no one suspected its existence, unless the pretty Arabian lamp—which was now extinguished—was burning. I made this place my refuge, as I should have very much disliked to appear before these unknown, yet well-known, people in this masquerade.

I was hardly in my hiding-place when the whole party streamed into the atelier.

I was delighted to watch, unseen, the Abbé Liszt; he did not appear to be in a particularly good temper. His faithful Countess Dönhoff was very lively, and as well as the other Hungarian and

Austrian beau-monde, peeped into every corner, and at every canvas. Exclamations of admiration in German, French, and Hungarian sounded extremely near my niche, and I trembled lest I should be discovered, yet Makart managed every time to draw their attention to something else. At last, marshalled by Lenbach, they disappeared, and I, who had become terribly hot in my heavy garments in that warm corner, stepped out into the full light of the winter sun, which was streaming through the high window.

At that moment Franz Liszt, who wished to say something to Makart, turned round, and a cry of admiration escaped his lips. Hans made the most desperate efforts to hide me from Liszt by standing between us, but the taller celebrity pushed the shorter celebrity aside with a wave of the hand, and approaching me with outstretched finger asked, "Who is that? Who?"

I had to laugh; and Hans and Lenbach, who was standing in the doorway, called out, the former in a rage and the latter in amusement, "Liszt, go!—Come!—the Countess is waiting!"

"Let her wait," he answered. "Who are you, and why don't we know each other?"

I now laughed heartily, and told him who I was. "Ach so!" he said joyfully, "now I understand! But why have we never met? Two people such as we are ought to know each other! Lenbach, you keep the Dönhoff and the others with you—I will follow later! Makart, you want to paint this picture here? I can tell you beforehand it is impossible. You will *never* be able to do it! Show me what you have painted."

Makart did not want to do this, as he had hardly begun it, but the Abbé hunted out the canvas, looked at the picture a long time, shook his head, then laid it down and said to me, "No, that won't do. But—have you ever heard me play?"

"Yes! Once at my parents' house, and yesterday at the concert."

"*Not at all*, then; for at that time you were too young, and in the concerts I am merely a great virtuoso, but not really myself! Well, Makart, to-morrow evening I am coming here to you, and then I will play—there on that piano, for this woman."

I was delighted, enchanted, although Master Hans looked vexed. Lenbach was calling out in the doorway, "Come, Liszt! the Countess is impatient!"

"I'm coming! Good-bye—till to-morrow!"—and he went.

Mere words could never describe the magical charm of that next evening. Charlotte Wolter, Makart, Lenbach, Liszt, and I—no one else.

Hans Makart understood how to transform his atelier into a veritable temple of colour, and very few mortals have had the privilege of hearing Liszt play in such an entourage.

We wept and laughed, rejoiced and sobbed, just as the great master of music wished, and I, who sat next to him, and was all enthusiasm, have never passed an hour that thrilled my soul so powerfully, and I shall never forget it! It was an intoxicating evening!

The great artist invited me, towards the end of it, to visit him in Budapest. I did not do it. I did not want the picture of that magical evening to be effaced from my memory, as his home and life in Hungary would certainly have effaced it. I never saw him again.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE most interesting house in Vienna at that time was the Laubes'. Their famous coffee-parties, which took place every day from five to seven, brought together all the celebrities, intellectual and artistic, who were then in the city on the shores of the Danube.

Heinrich Laube and his clever, though unprepossessing, wife were, during these hours, the most amiable of hosts. At other times they preferred being alone. Between the hours just mentioned, one could meet in their drawing-room every one who was well known in art, literature, and science. There was an absolute *sans gêne*. After shaking hands with the hosts, and receiving a cup of coffee, one could enter into a discussion about theatres and acting with the "doctor," as Heinrich Laube was called generally, or one listened to the remarks of Frau Iduna, or one amused oneself according to one's fancy.

I always remained near the doctor, for the most interesting people collected round him; and when he expressed his views in his own witty and original way, one could always learn something from him, and find food for reflection.

Once, when I was slowly toiling up the six flights of stairs that led to the Laubes' dwelling, a tall and dainty figure in a most charming white summer toilette hurried past me, and ran upstairs quickly, as if with winged feet.

I, who was then a little over twenty, sighed, and thought, "*Oh, youth, youth!* I am sure that is a young girl—perhaps a débutante on the Vienna stage, who has come to ask the doctor for advice and help!"

When I reached the drawing-room, Frau Iduna said to me, "Ah, that's right, let me introduce you at once to a most interesting woman—Fanny Elsler."

"Is she alive? Why, at the beginning of the century——!" She led me up to my young girl of the staircase, who, in her white dress and hat, dark curls and sylphlike figure, greeted me most charmingly.

This! Fanny Elsler! The once famous dancer, who is said to have been the only love of the poor and short-lived king of Rome—the unfortunate son of Napoleon I.! It is said they initiated each other in love's mysteries. She must be over seventy now, and could it be possible that this dainty woman sitting before me, the very incarnation of youth, was she?

She nodded graciously, and we were soon conversing in the most effusive way, for she had many stories to tell about the time when she had danced before various crowned heads and delighted them all. She told me it was she and her sister (later on the wife of a Prussian prince) who first conceived the idea of transforming the hitherto senseless ballet dancing into a kind of dramatic art with mimic gesture. Her conversation was as charming as her looks. A few evenings later I saw her at a *première* in the Laube Theatre, in full dress, and covered with the jewels she had received from royal and imperial hands. Her still beautiful arms and shoulders were bare, and I understood the love and admiration of the king of Rome and so many others for her.

Heinrich Laube himself was most remarkable when he appeared at our rehearsals in the capacity of *régisseur*. His hideous exterior, gnome-like form,

and bulldog face, were made still more hideous by his wonderful garments, which were cut according to his own ideas, so that our men often asked wonderingly, "Where on earth can the tailor live who makes such things as that?"

In winter he wore an enormous felt hat, and wound a thick plaid shawl like a petticoat round his stomach. However, in this costume he worked wonders! In this very dress he showed our leading lady how to play Gretchen, and did it so magnificently that we were all moved. He showed the hero how to play Romeo, and although in everyday life his voice was harsh and unpleasant, he did it in the most melting tones and enticing manner. He even showed me (the leading society lady) how to play some distinguished *salon* rôle, and did it so well that I often thought, "What a regal manner! What fineness of perception! If you could only act like that!" On those occasions he rose above himself, and no doubt revelled in the idea of being a great actor, and of realising all the ideal personalities of the poet.

I best remember Laube as *régisseur* when we were studying Lindau's new drama *Maria and Magdalena*. I have already spoken of my friendship with Paul Lindau. He took the greatest interest in my "stage career," and watched over my first theatrical efforts with loving care.

At that time he was a favourite dramatist, and a new play by him was looked forward to with impatient interest. It was a very good thing for me that he had written the drama *Maria and Magdalena* especially for me, and my début in Vienna. He sent it to me act by act as he wrote it, introduced many episodes out of my life into it, and made many allusions to my personality.

A few weeks before the performance which, as I have already stated, was my début at the Laube Theatre, Paul Lindau arrived in Vienna; and at its

first reading at rehearsal, the piece was received with great applause. Laube once more proved himself a helpful *régisseur*. At the end of the first act Lindau had inserted one of Eichendorff's poems as a declamation for Maria. Laube protested against this, and suggested instead one of Goethe's poems, "Gedicht an den Mond" (Verses to the Moon).

Lindau agreed to this, and I, as Maria, much preferred the change. Both of us, poet and actress, are indebted to practical old Laube for this. Things did not always work so smoothly when discussions arose between author and *régisseur* regarding the staging. Laube disapproved of all modern decorative art, and would really have preferred bare boards as in Shakespeare's time, with inscriptions dotted about such as, "This is a park," "This is a castle," and so forth!

Lindau insisted on proper drawing-room decorations for his play, which was supposed to take place at a Prince's Court. Laube was indignant at his considering a carpet an absolute necessity. The old man would have none of it, and the battle lasted several days. At last I declared that I would not expose my costly dresses to the dirt and dust of the bare boards. He grumbled terribly, and declared that the modern creatures wished to "gild refined gold"; nevertheless the carpet appeared.

As regards all the details and finer characteristics of every individual rôle, Laube was as particular as his well-known colleague Alexander Strakosch, so the performance was an immense success, and all connected with it regarded it as one of the most triumphant evenings of the Laube Theatre.

What enthusiasm and striving for highest ideals! What hope and joyful unity of purpose reigned among us then! I still love to think of it.

It was during this stay in Vienna that I first learnt to know and appreciate the genius of Richard Wagner, and became more nearly acquainted with

The Ring, Tristan und Isolde, etc., through Materna and Scaria, who sang to pianoforte accompaniment.

I was soon so infatuated with the texts of Wagner's work that I often read them to my friends when, as frequently occurred at small parties, I was asked to read aloud—a talent which, above all others, I may be allowed to call my own. There one or another musician present played the musical accompaniment to it, and in this way we often passed the most delightful evenings.

The Lohengrin problem moved me most of all. When I heard it for the first time as a young girl, I fainted with emotion in the theatre. It always moves me in the same way, for I consider this Lohengrin symbol in its inner meaning to be one of the truest and most tragic in the literature of the whole world.

The command, "Never ask, nor try to find out whence I came, what my name is, or who I am," seems to me to contain the essence of the cruel secret of the gulf that, notwithstanding love and possession, always divides two human beings. For, if we were to transgress the command, try to fathom the beloved being whose inner self has remained more or less of a problem to us, if we try to discover "his name and whence he came," we are face to face with the terrible revelation that *knowledge* means *severance*. We should always discover something unexpected and different from ourselves in the person we love, be it a god who must withdraw himself the moment he is disclosed, or be it a demon which had been mercifully hidden from us, and before whom we must cover our faces and behold through tears the wreck of our happiness.

I enlarged on this idea more fully in an essay on "Theosophy and Art," and have come to the conclusion that the longing for entire comprehension of the other, for full possession and intermingling of soul with the object of our love, can only be felt in

moments of the greatest erotic happiness and perfect union, such as Richard Wagner describes so beautifully in the death-scene of *Tristan und Isolde.*

Bodily union between human beings must always contain the germ of longing to overstep the boundary which divides one soul from another, because in that moment man most nearly approaches God the creator. For this reason the delights of physical union played such a prominent part in ancient mysteries, which were supposed to represent the highest capabilities of the soul.

At this time it was Wagner who helped me most to understand the obscure depths of human nature, and my sojourn in Vienna was full of fascinating impressions.

The monetary troubles I have already alluded to compelled me to go on theatrical tours, as these were more remunerative than a fixed engagement. In doing this I followed the advice of friends, but I found myself utterly unsuited to the life.

Delicate in health, and spoilt from childhood, I was not happy for a single hour. This Bohemian life, although combined with a certain elegance and luxury, was too fatiguing; for the constant travelling and rehearsing—also acting at night—overtaxed my strength. I remember a time when, after playing at night, let us say either in Hamburg or Cologne, I had to get up next morning at six, travel to Kiel or Elberfeld by train, stand rehearsing until twelve or one o'clock, and act again in the evening. This sort of thing happened daily for weeks on end. I have often heard strong healthy men say they could not stand it.

It was a different thing when we remained for any length of time in bigger towns, such as Berlin or Dresden, when we could take things more comfortably, and I could enjoy my successes in peace.

One fact in connection with my theatrical career I ought to mention. I was often asked whether I

did not suffer from the envy and intrigues of my colleagues. My answer was then as now, "No, never!"

I had an exceptional position in Schwerin, because Friedmann and I drew our salaries from the Grand Duke's privy purse; but I recall with the deepest gratitude the extreme kindness all the ladies and gentlemen of the company exhibited towards me—who was only a beginner.

From the public also I received so many marks of kindness that I remember those theatrical days with emotion. I have lost the many proofs of this during my travels, and can only quote the following letter. The writer was a young and charming woman, and it meant a great deal that a member of the highest Mecklenburg nobility thus approached an actress. After visiting me she wrote:

DEAR MADAM—The hours I spent with you are such a pleasant remembrance that I deeply regret not having made your acquaintance earlier. Now that you are on the point of leaving us so soon, our first meeting proves to me how much I shall lose by your departure. My only consolation lies in the hope that we may meet and learn to know each other better at some future time.

I now wish more than ever that I had a really good picture of you. If, dear madam, you could spare me one of the coloured ones we spoke of, I should be deeply grateful and pleased if you will send it me. I enclose a portrait of myself, in the hope that you will understand the warmth of my appreciation, and not consider I am asking too much. Trusting that you will think of me sometimes—I am, your sincere admirer,

E. VON M.

P.S.—My husband begs to be remembered to you!

Such proofs of sympathy helped me through many heavy hours. As regards the kindness of my colleagues, I had fresh evidence of this on the occasion when we were invited by the Berlin Press to give a performance in that city. I was to play with Friedrich Haase and other celebrities of the State Theatre in *Diplomats of the Old School.* Just before that evening, which was to be a most im-

portant one in my career, as I was appearing for the first time before the critical public of Berlin, ill-luck had it that I caught a severe cold. I woke up at night to find I had lost my voice entirely. I sent for a doctor and told him I *must* act that evening, and must find my voice again. He said it was absolutely impossible, and, on my insisting, he gave me such strong remedies that I might have lost my voice for ever. At noon I was already able to make myself heard at rehearsal. Every one of my colleagues proved their kindness in trying to help me. They made tea, and all kinds of soothing drinks in their dressing-rooms, and tried to console and encourage me. The director, who had placed his enormous Victoria Theatre that evening at the disposal of the Press, said that the house was sold out, and would have been if it had been three times the size. Places were being sold at the Exchange for 100 marks, as every one in Berlin wanted to see "The Racowitza."

"Therefore," he said, "pull yourself together, because you will have to expose yourself to the severe criticisms of friend and foe."

At this Friedmann said quietly, "She need have no fear in this, or any other *salon* rôle."

This gave me courage, but I trembled when I thought of my voice.

"Shall we make mention of it?" said the director.

"Certainly not," replied my dear friend Fritz Haase; "it will be so much better by the evening that nobody will notice the hoarseness unless their attention has been drawn to it."

And so it was. The evening arrived, and Hedwig Niemann—Raabe herself—came to my room to assist me to make up.

The great moment of my appearance arrived. When I went on to the stage in a very beautiful white gown, I was greeted by storms of applause from my friends, mingled, however, with the hisses of enemies. For a moment my heart misgave me, then

I saw my comrades standing in the wings, nodding at me as if they wished to help their child with kindly thoughts. It then flashed through my mind: "The public is right; it wants to see what you are capable of doing before it applauds." I began to speak, my voice sounded full and clear, and I grew calmer.

The rôle, which is most sympathetic to me, begins with a long speech. When I had finished it a volley of cheers burst from the over-full house, it seemed as if it would never end. I had won over my Berlin public for all time. From that moment, whenever I returned there, I was sure of the full favour of the "Spree-Athenians," usually so cool and critical, and nowhere did I play with greater pleasure than before my Berliners, who understood every nuance of my acting.

The same occurred in Vienna. I can only think with gratitude of the kindness I invariably met amongst my friends of this much-maligned profession.

There is not much of importance to relate in connection with my theatrical career; at most, a few vivid recollections of some of the great artists of the day.

My admiration was given principally to Ludwig Dessoir, whom I considered one of the greatest character players of that time. He was a member of the Berlin State Theatre, and no one regretted his early death, from softening of the brain, more than I did. In many rôles I deemed him greater than Bogumil Davison, on account of his fine understanding and brilliant rendering. Oh, if one could only reproduce one of the impressions he transmitted from the stage!

This would be impossible—quite impossible!

Bogumil Davison had perhaps greater incisiveness, and was certainly wonderful with his Slavonic temperament and illuminating mind, but he hardly moved one to the depths of one's being as Ludwig Dessoir did.

Koberstein, a Dresden actor, thus described the two great masters of dramatic art, Bogumil Davison and the eternally young and handsome Emil Devrient. Koberstein said: "The fairies went to Emil's cradle and laid within it bodily beauty, fascinating voice, and power over the hearts of women, whilst saying, 'Now go and become a great actor!'"

"They also went to Bogumil's cradle, laid therein the same gifts, and adding mind and passion to them, said, 'Now go and become what you like, you will be a great man always!'"

The following opinion was expressed regarding Davison's charming amiability (which Emil Devrient also possessed). He had three qualities, *one* of which usually suffices to make a man absolutely unbearable —he was a Pole, a Jew, and an actor! Yet he made it possible with all three to become such a great, eminent, and amiable being.

Siegwart Friedmann was Davison's only pupil, and for many years had lived with him and his witty and excellent wife whilst following his studies. Through him I learnt to know them better, and not only reverenced him as an artist, but appreciated both of them in their delightful home in Dresden.

Every one mourned when he, like his formidable rival Dessoir, succumbed to softening of the brain.

Whilst mentioning Davison's wife, who remained my friend for many years, I should like to testify my gratitude to many other women who, although not great celebrities in art or literature, stood by me as friends in the best sense of the word, and who, if death has not already claimed them, still brighten the evening of my life by their faithful affection.

I had, and still have, the joy, which I reckon as one of the best things in my life, of attracting and retaining the deep and true friendship of women, even more than that of men. Through all the storm and stress of my varied existence I have never been without the friendship of remarkable women of all

grades of society. I keep this memory in the secret chamber of my heart, and place it as the most precious jewel in the crown of all my most beautiful experiences! I am very, very thankful that I have had to suffer so little from the usual jealousy of women, and from intrigue and dislike of my fellow-artists.

I can complain as little of the weakness, infidelity, and unreliability of men. I never learnt to know this side of them, therefore could only be silent or defend them when they were discussed in this capacity by my women friends.

Several well-known names stand out in my mind. For instance, Marie Seebach and her engaging little rival, Hedwig Raabe (both wives of Albert Niemann), Auguste Baudius-Wilbrandt, Marie Damböck-Straszmann, Charlotte Wolter, Marie Geistinger, not forgetting the charming little Gallmeyer.

Among men, I particularly remember Albert Träger. We first met when touring in Berlin. A few days sufficed to form a friendship, which even to-day is one of the most valued ones in my life. Unfortunately the poems he wrote me, as well as all the criticisms of my theatre days, were lost in New York; but much-prized letters still speak to me of that delightful time of good comradeship and interesting correspondence.

I must also mention another fleeting but wonderfully pleasant acquaintanceship. I was acting in Berlin, and staying at the Hôtel de Rome. When I was going to table d'hôte, "old Mühling" (the well-known and favourite hotel proprietor) came up to me and said, "I have put you next to Wilhelmj. I think you will both be interested to know each other." And so it was.

When I first arrived in Dresden, I was told in the Hôtel Bellevue that some one had inquired several times about my arrival. "A gentleman?" I asked.

"No, not exactly a gentleman—a man," was the

answer; and soon, to my great astonishment, a man, looking like a superior workman, was ushered in.

He looked at me quietly for a short time, then said, "Dear lady, there is a plot against you among the working people here. They intend making a great demonstration when you first appear. I wanted to tell you this, and warn you, for I always took your part, because I do not believe you acted as badly against our Lassalle as many of us think. I always say you were too young and weak, and could have had no idea how it would end; but people are dreadfully against you, and won't listen to me. I thought to myself, 'When she comes here I will go and see her, and she shall tell me her point of view in the matter, and we shall see if she acted wickedly or only thoughtlessly.' Will you?"

I was much touched by what this honest-looking, good-natured man said. I gave him my hand, thanked him, and told him all my sad story—how it had driven me away from home and family; how I was alone in the world and obliged to earn my living.

The man listened to me attentively, then said, "Yes, yes, my wife and I imagined something of the sort. One only need look into your eyes to know you are a good soul. I thank you for having spoken to me as if I were a brother; nothing will happen to you now, you can depend upon me for this."

He then left. He must have been a man of great influence in his party; and this was not to be wondered at, considering his broad intelligence and relatively good education. It was as he had promised me.

I cannot deny that when I first appeared as the Marquise in a play called *The Lion in Love*, which had many points in common with my own story, I was somewhat nervous. The house was crammed, and one look at the gallery showed me that it was packed. At first, when the occupants of the better seats greeted me with applause, not a sound came

from that quarter. It was only as the evening wore on, and I gradually conquered the hearts of the critical section, that they let themselves be carried away by their impressions; and in the end their cheering was as hearty as that of the other spectators.

Similar scenes occurred in Stettin and Breslau. In those towns the Socialistic newspapers were against me, and hostile placards were issued. In Breslau the people were warned against my coming, and told they ought not to allow the woman who caused Lassalle's death to show herself in the town of his birth, and where his ashes rested. Fear is a thing I know nothing of, therefore I took no notice of the prayers and warnings of my friends, and went to both towns on tour.

In Stettin, the theatre where I was playing lay rather far from my hotel.

When I went out after the performance, accompanied only by my maid, the carriage which usually awaited me was not there. I had not changed my dress (I had been playing again in Ponsard's *Lion in Love*), and as it was a dark-green empire gown, this was not necessary.

As I stepped out I noticed a large crowd of men waiting at the exit. I say "men," as I saw at a glance they were not gentlemen.

"Aha," I thought, "now it is coming!" I looked round and said to my maid, "I can't stand here in the cold. Let us go on foot."

Then one of the men came up to me and said civilly, "It is very dark all round here, and you might be annoyed on the way home. We all will accompany you, and—have no fear—we will land you there safely!"

I knew by the tone of the speaker that he meant well, thanked him, and accepted the escort of all of them.

On the way he told me almost the same thing as

the man in Dresden had, that he and one or two others had calmed the masses who were to-day convinced that injustice had been done to me, and that I was far more to be pitied than condemned.

Thus it was I found here, as so often in life, that people were kinder and more comprehending than is generally believed.

In Breslau nothing at all happened. I do not know, and never could find out, who it was who had interceded for me, and worked upon the minds of the people there.

It was in Breslau that I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the aged Holtei, the poet, and author of the charming work *Vagabonds*. The old man, who was then over eighty years of age, was so bright and merry, and so absolutely clear in his mind, that I was delighted with him, and did not mind going the long journey to the institution in which he lived in order to see him frequently. I remember writing at the time to my friend Albert Träger, telling him how much I liked old Holtei, and how I wished that we also, if ever we became as old as he, could be as gay and as fully in possession of all our faculties.

Well! friend Träger at least has reached his seventieth year in the same happy conditions. I, too, am not so very far off it, and am wondering how it will be with me then. *Qui vivra verra!*

CHAPTER XXX

It was during this time of theatrical touring that an event happened which, after a certain amount of struggle, caused a complete change in my life, and, slight as it seemed at the time, gave the stamp to my whole future. I refer to my meeting with my present husband, Serge von Schewitsch. My journeys led me to Kissingen. At that time the theatre there was managed by a very clever director, who had asked me to give a few performances of my best rôles, namely those of *salon* parts.

A friend of mine was taking the waters there, so the idea of visiting this charming Bavarian health resort was doubly welcome.

My friend, a Russian, said to me one day that two delightful compatriots of his had arrived, an uncle and a nephew, Count Blüdow and Serge von Schewitsch.

He wanted to arrange a little dinner at which I was to make their acquaintance. This took place.

The old Count sat next to me on one side, and my host on the other. We got on splendidly, and I hardly noticed the young man who was my *vis-à-vis*, so much so that, when my friend asked me next day, "How did you like that clever young Schewitsch? has he cut me out altogether?" I replied, "The old man is charming, I hardly noticed the younger one."

He, when he was asked next day what impression I had made on him, replied, "Is *that* the renowned beauty? I don't think her so beautiful!" Never-

theless the woman whom Ferdinand Lassalle had loved, interested him. It was therefore no *coup de foudre*, no love at first sight, that was the means of riveting our destinies together.

Although we often met in Kissingen, neither of us was particularly interested in the other, and we parted almost as strangers.

Two months later I was standing on the platform of the station at Salzburg awaiting the arrival of friends. I was a little early, and was idly watching the trains which came from various quarters, when out of one of them stepped an elegant young man, who came up to me smiling.

At the first moment I scarcely remembered who he was, but as soon as he uttered his greeting I was struck anew by the timbre of his sympathetic voice, one of his main charms, and I said to myself, "Oh yes! The young man of Kissingen, Count Blüdow's nephew!" But of his own name I had not the remotest idea.

He had to wait at Salzburg for his train. I, too, had to wait, as my friends had not arrived, so we sat at an empty table, and were soon deep in a serious conversation. I then understood what my Russian friend had meant when he called the young man "clever." I discovered he was a convinced Socialist, as much at home in the writings of Lassalle and Carl Marx as he was in the great literature of Germany, France, Russia, England, and Italy. There was hardly anything we did not discuss in those hours at the Salzburg station, for I let my friends wait for me, and my new and youthful friend allowed many trains to pass without attempting to take advantage of them. When at last the parting hour arrived he said, "Well! if ever you want to write your memoirs, you call me, and dictate them to me. If I am alive and not imprisoned for my political agitation, I will come!"

I nodded and laughed, and he continued his

journey. It only then occurred to me that I did not even know his name. However, it mattered little, as I had no intention of writing my memoirs yet a while!

After this episode, which was so fateful to me, I returned to Vienna. About this time there had been much speculation as to the possibility of my re marrying, yet I was clever enough not to accept any of the proposals that were made. I always remained the best of friends with my lovers when they became reasonable. As a rule they agreed with me when I assured them I was not born to be a housewife. I said, "What is the use of marrying, if, even in advance, one depends on divorce? One cannot make a habit of such things!"

I recall one case which concerned a good-natured young man of excellent family, the facts of which I once used as the subject for a novel. I will touch upon the scene which formed the basis of my refusal.

I liked the youth, his personal appearance and manners, very much. He had often assisted me in my various charities among the poor (a trait of my character which I have not spoken of hitherto, and which I will again refer to later on). When my means for these charitable practices ran short, he often supplemented them, and I should have been sorry to hurt his feelings on this account.

One day he returned to his *idée fixe*, as I called it, and once again pressed me to marry him. I said, "Just tell me, dear Count, how do you pass your time? For instance, when do you get up?"

"About eleven or twelve o'clock."

"And then?" I asked.

"Well! then I breakfast, that is to say, after I have had my bath, been massaged, dressed, been shaved by my man-servant."

"And after that?"

"Well! one lounges about a bit, looks at the newspapers, reads the sporting news, and so forth."

"And then?"

"Then I go for a little walk in the Ringstrasse. I generally meet somebody or other, and——"

"Then, I suppose," I added impatiently, "you have a little chat with somebody?"

"Well—one doesn't exactly *chat*—one looks at the ladies and the girls, then one goes home to change for——"

"For what?"

"To drive out visiting, or to ride in the Prater, or go to the club—or dine at home or elsewhere."

"Does all this amuse you?"

"Not exactly; but I smoke or stand about."

"What do you do in the evenings, when you do not come and see me act?"

"I go to the club."

"Do you read much there?" I asked, amused at his ridiculous answers.

"Read!" replied the Count, as astonished as if I had asked him if he danced on the tight-rope—"read *what*?"

"Do you gamble?"

"No, I never gamble. I promised my late father I wouldn't, and so I don't."

"Then you talk of horses or dogs?"

"No, they don't interest me. I am no hunter, and not much of a sportsman."

"Well, then, I suppose you talk of women, or something of that sort?" I asked.

"No! no! Phew! Who would talk of women at the club?"

"Well! what in the world *do* you do at the club?"

"I just sit there and look about."

I hardly contained myself any longer, but added, however, "Don't you bore yourself to death with such a life?"

"It certainly isn't very amusing, and that is the reason I want to marry *you*, because you are so amusing and so clever."

"My dear friend," I exclaimed, half laughing, half angrily, "that would be quite a false speculation, for I should either go mad or become horribly dull, or most probably I should run away from you in a few weeks."

He looked quite disturbed, and said forlornly, "Am I then such a miserable creature, in spite of my blue blood and all my money?"

"Not that exactly," I said. "You would make a charming husband for a little *Comtesse* in your own set, but not for Helene Racowitza—any more than I should be the right wife for you. We can be good friends, of course, but nothing more."

We remained the best of comrades until I left Vienna. He died a few years later, either of consumption or boredom, before he made any one happy by marrying her. The rest of my aspiring friends were less dull than he. Nevertheless, none of them were suitable in my mind for marriage, and I was glad I was never tempted to burden myself with the responsibility of any of them.

Now I will quote one or two comic episodes in connection with the characters I have alluded to. As I said before, I was not always flush of money, but I generally had enough to help those who were worse off than I.

On sundry occasions I had helped a young Polish actor who was playing the rôle of leading lover in the Court Theatre at Warsaw, and who interested us all in Vienna very much. He was trying to get over an unhappy affair with a ballet dancer, which had driven him to the verge of poisoning himself.

This fact and his fame as an actor gave him a sort of nimbus that attracted us.

I had learned to know him better when we met in a sanatorium near Vienna, where we both were sent to recruit our nerves (he for the effects of his unhappy love affair, I for the result of a severe illness).

I was extremely sorry for the poor fellow, who

was still in the throes of his passion, and asked all my colleagues to take pity on him. He seemed to amuse himself very well in Vienna, where I saw him now and then after my return.

One day he came to me in great excitement. He said he had just received a telegram from Warsaw saying that his lady-love was dying; he must return there at once, but for the moment he had not the necessary means. He needed a few hundred florins to enable him to leave Vienna and reach Warsaw. In any case, his leave would be over in a few days. In short, could I lend him the money.

I had not got it at the time, but I was wearing several costly rings, and at the moment he was speaking to me I had on a most beautiful emerald in "Duchesse" form, worth several thousand marks.

I drew this from my finger, gave it to the young Pole and told him to pawn it, to take as much money as he wanted, and to send me the balance with the ticket by a friend he named.

He wept with joy, and hastened away with the ring. I heard and saw nothing more either of the ring, the man, or the friend.

I was chaffed unmercifully by my colleagues. Every day for a long time, one or another said, "The Racowitza has still a lot of beautiful jewellery; they also were summoned to a dying lover, and did not see why she should have more compassion for the unknown Pole than for her own respectable comrades of the Vienna Theatre. If there were no more rings to be had, they would be satisfied with brooches or ear-rings!"

I was chaffed still more about the following. I had received a letter with the most noble signature. An unhappy father implored me to give him an interview. He had a daughter in Munich; he could tell me no more than this by letter; I could do him an enormous service, and save this daughter from a great calamity, if I would only see him! He dared not

come and see me personally, as he was married and in a very prominent position. For these reasons he could not expose himself to idle talk by visiting a lady belonging to the stage! He wanted me to take compassion on him and meet him at a certain place. As I was always rather cautious with letters from unknown persons, I showed it to my friends.

Some of them urged me to go, others warned me against some treachery. However, the author had thrown himself on my compassion, and as I did not want to appear a coward, I went.

I found a very worthy looking old gentleman, who, with tears in his eyes, thanked me for coming.

After some shilly-shallying, I asked in what way I could be useful to him, as I knew only a very few people in Munich now.

"And if it were only *one* person," he said, "as long as this person were reliable!"

He had a daughter by a former marriage (or something equivalent, he added, smiling) who was a thorn in the side of his present wife. She had now married an artist, or musician, and consequently cut herself entirely off from her father's circle. Lately, after many years, he had learned from a friend who was passing through Munich that his daughter was in very bad circumstances, and he would like to find out, through me, if this were so. In any case, he wanted to send her some money. I was quite touched, for the story had great similarity with my own. The confidence the old gentleman placed in me did me good, I promised everything, and we said farewell. Next morning I received a letter asking would I be good enough to send a ten-pound order immediately to Barbara Malmeyer—*poste restante*, Munich! He could not go out himself to-day, but he would return me the money personally on the morrow at the same time and place as before. I chanced to have the money, as it was pay day, and, not wishing to disappoint the worthy old man, I sent

it. He was not there next day, nor have I ever heard of him since!

On making inquiries, I found that the man who really bore the name signed by my old gentleman was quite a different person, although they were somewhat alike in personal appearance, and that I had simply been taken in in rather a foolish way.

The old swindler had, without doubt, found out something of my disposition, and counted, rightly, on my not following the matter up. Neither did I.

Both the "worthy old gentleman" and the "genial Pole" were for a long time equivalents for swindling and cheating.

Apropos of cheating and swindling, I remember an amusing story. During the summer I was travelling for some time, then went to a bathing-place, leaving my household in charge of a faithful Hungarian cook.

After my return, I made the acquaintance of a young man who was a resident in the Theresianum —the institution devoted entirely to sons of the Viennese nobility.

The beautiful park of this educational institute lay just opposite my dwelling, and the lovely view was one of its principal attractions.

After he had been to see me several times, he asked me one day, very mysteriously, if he might bring his friend Count K. to see me. The Count had been, until a little time ago, also a "Theresianer."

"Certainly, with pleasure!" I replied.

"But," stammered my still very shy friend, "you know that in summer——"

"What do you mean, 'in summer'?"

At first he would say nothing more than, "He doesn't think so—and for this reason he told me to ask you——"

At this I grew half impatient, half curious, then he came out with a strange story. He, my young friend, had mentioned my name, and told Count K.

that he read French authors with me, and that I had been the first to make him thoroughly understand Shakespeare and the German classics. Count K. had acquiesced smilingly when Baron de G. had raved about my beauty and amiability, but as regards the latter part of the story, his smile changed to mockery when the cultivation of my mind was in question, and he exclaimed, "Nonsense, nonsense! The Racowitza is anything you like, but don't talk about her education. Why, she is a Hungarian; charming enough, but often very peculiar."

"Oh, you know her then? Where did you meet?" asked my young friend inquisitively.

"Well, I didn't speak of it, but in summer, while you and all the others were away for your holidays, I got very intimate with the beautiful lady."

I was naturally very astounded at hearing this, and told him to confront me with him at once. Shortly afterwards, Baron de G. and his friend Count K., who was an utter stranger to me, stood before me. The latter opened his eyes even wider than I did. He looked around in astonishment, first at the room, then at me, and lastly at the garment I was wearing, which was a white silk tea-gown embroidered in pale blue and silver, and therefore a little unusual. He then exclaimed breathlessly, seemingly overcome by the peculiarity of the situation, "Pardon, it is really too extraordinary. The *room* is the same, the *dress* is the same—but the *lady* is not the same—not at all the same!"

"Good heavens! this is madness!" I exclaimed. "What did the person look like who was supposed to be me?"

Count K., who was still a very young man, stammered in confusion, "She is black as a coal, with large black eyes. She always had long gloves on, which reached to her elbows, and is quite, quite different. Besides this, she speaks with a strong Hungarian accent."

For a moment we all three stared at each other. Then an idea struck me. I rang for my maid, and told her to tell Marie, the pretty Hungarian cook, to come to the drawing-room at once, just as she was. She appeared, quite smart, but very cook-like. Tableau!

On the threshold she burst out, "Jesus, Marie, and Joseph! The Count! Oh my! Gracious lady! No, I won't stay a moment!" and off she ran.

The person who was most upset at the whole affair was the Count. He was infinitely ashamed at having been so duped, and our assurances that such an "accident" could easily happen to *any* young man who was not careful, made very little impression on him. He left, and nothing would induce him to come to the "dangerous" house again.

When I asked the ambitious cook, who was sobbing in the kitchen, how she had dared to take him in so, and even go to the length of wearing my dresses, she replied, quite crushed, "He was so nice, the Herr Graf—and if he had known I was only miladi's cook, he would never have come."

"But how did you make his acquaintance?"

"I saw him in the Theresianum garden, and I made signs to him."

"And my dress, and my gloves! how can you have *dared* to wear them?"

"Oh, madam, I always had a *bath* first, before I put them on; and without gloves he would have seen my red hands and wouldn't have believed!"

I could not help laughing, but nevertheless told the all-too-gifted cook to fold her tents and depart, especially as I discovered that whilst playing "the lady" she had proved herself too generous with my wine cellar towards her aristocratic young friend, and especially had not spared my champagne.

The ridiculous story was the source of the greatest amusement to all my friends for a long time; and they laughed particularly at the credulity of the youthful

Count, who had mistaken a Hungarian cook for Helene von Racowitza.

During the following winter, the great exertions entailed by my theatrical touring weakened my health considerably. The doctors on the Rhine, where I stayed a great deal, advised me to give up my profession for a time, and to seek recovery in Italy.

Italy? No! Some of my family were living there. Also that country held only sad recollections for me. I did not want to go there. I didn't like Paris either. A soft mild climate was never good for my nerves.

But the North, the land of snow and ice, the home of my first love — *that* tempted me; the magnificent Russian metropolis — St. Petersburg! It beckoned to me, and I followed its call. I went there in spite of the astonishment and warning of my friends, in spite of the head-shaking of the doctors; I was drawn thither as if I were following the call of Destiny.

Without special object, or any reason that could further my interests, and as there was nothing to prevent my doing so, I followed my fancy.

PART VI

St. Petersburg—Journey—Life and doings there—Some dark episodes—The great love of my life comes—A strange beginning—Mysterious "Walter"—Journey from St. Petersburg to Paris—In Paris—London—To America.

CHAPTER XXXI

My journey to St. Petersburg was not accomplished in the usual way. When I was starting, I met a German Prince of my acquaintance, who was about to visit his sister, the wife of a Russian Grand Duke. We were both delighted to meet, and I travelled in grand style in the extra royal carriage which was waiting at the frontier. In short, I travelled most pleasantly in every way. The Prince and his suite were amusing and clever companions, and the hours flew so that we could hardly believe it when we reached St. Petersburg.

Arriving in such style and company, I soon came in contact with members of the noblest families, and before long learnt to appreciate their amiability, cleverness, and kindness of heart. It is true that, despite their fastidious refinement and elegant manners, they sometimes gave vent to ideas that were most astounding; this seemed to transport one suddenly into the heart of Asia.

Prince Ob was an exceptionally clever elderly man; one could chat on every imaginable subject with him in the pleasantest way. He was equally familiar with Russian, German, French, and English literature. In short, he made an absolutely European impression. One day the conversation turned on politics. At that time (I speak of 1875-76) the first signs were observed in St. Petersburg which led in 1881 to the assassination of the Emperor Alexander II., the consequences of which are felt even to-day.

Numbers of young people were arrested and banished to Siberia, without trial, every one knows under what cruelties.

We began talking of this, and I expressed my sympathy for the poor things. Then the old Prince, who was otherwise so good-natured and pleasant, said, "There we are again! People do nothing else but make martyrs out of these young madcaps! Of course this encourages all the others. One ought to give every political criminal fifty strokes with the knout, then their nimbus would be taken away from them, and the shame of it would cure the rest."

"My dear Prince," I exclaimed in horror, "what a barbarous idea! Of course you are only joking."

"I was never so serious! One can only cure such social evils with the knout. If one treated the fools like street-boys instead of martyrs, the others would mind what they were doing!"

It is impossible to argue against such views. In consequence of this and similar conversations, I often said, "The Russian mind is like the kingdom itself, very broad, very rich and fruitful; but there suddenly comes the boundary which is drawn so rigidly that the foreigner cannot overstep it without passports; and only beyond the border comprehension begins again.'

Here is another case. A friend of my future husband, a highly educated doctor, had become a political suspect. He was dragged away from his people in the middle of the night and thrown into the terrible fortress of Peter and Paul. He had been there for months, and no one had heard of him again. This fortress is beautifully situated, commanding the finest views, and in its wonderful church the Emperors' graves are to be seen in all their glory; yet it contains all the infinite wretchedness of these poor political prisoners. They languish here, bereft of the hope of a just trial, or indeed any trial at all, in the damp, dark, dirty dungeons below, which are kept in a manner befitting the Middle Ages, until

merciful death releases them from their misery; or, should this be too long in coming, until (according to the official expression) they are "banished" to Siberia.

At last it was known (I know not through which secret channel) that the poor doctor was nearly blind, and consumptive. His well-to-do family (he had a wife and young children) hesitated at no pecuniary sacrifice to try and gain, not freedom (for they knew this was impossible), but only so much mercy as to allow the poor sick creature to be transported into a less deadly prison.

I had the doubtful privilege of knowing the two most powerful generals of St. Petersburg, "old Trepoff," the father of that one now so much talked of, and General Count Mesentzow. These two were just then at the head of the Chiefs of Police and of Secret Police.

I addressed myself first to General Trepoff. He replied that the affair was already in the department of the third division, *i.e.* of the Secret Police; it was a matter for General Mesentzow to see into. On applying to the latter, I received a smiling assurance that he had nothing to say on the question—it was wholly in the hands of Trepoff!

It dragged on for a time, until one day General Mesentzow received the confidential advice that *I* had better not interfere in the unpleasant business, otherwise I might find myself entangled in serious difficulties!

Every child knew at that time what this meant. The bare possibility made me shudder!

The crime of the prisoner in question was this: he had given one of the prisoners sent to Siberia a little bottle of morphia, in case the latter found the misery more than he could bear.

After that we could find out nothing more about him, nor what became of him, but supposed that his death, in order not to excite attention, was passed over in silence.

Anyhow, it was wisest on my part, being a foreigner, to adopt the same silence, in order to avoid being implicated in an unpleasant dilemma.

The two generals above mentioned became victims of the Revolutionists, or, as they were then called, of the Nihilists. Trepoff was mortally wounded by Wjera Sassulitsch, whilst Mesentzow perished in a bomb explosion.

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Away now with these dismal pictures! There were enough beautiful and brilliant things to look at and experience in St. Petersburg.

I was above all attracted by the magnificent "Eremitage." I passed hours and hours in the unique royal picture gallery. I knew every work of art and its place there so well that I could easily have served as guide, which, in fact, I did whenever friends of mine came from abroad and wanted to see the treasures of the Russian metropolis.

The superfluous magnificence of the churches and palaces had less attraction for me, but I loved the nightly troika drives, with their mad speed through the snow, gleaming brightly in the darkness; the fabulous luxury at the end of them when, in some splendid restaurant far away from the capital, a magnificent repast with costly wines would be served to entrancing gipsy music, which made every one, especially non-Russians, forget all the fatigue of the drive. The wonderful attraction of all these things seemed drawn from some fairy kingdom.

Then came the long "white nights," so loved by the people of the north—but which told terribly on my nerves—when Russians expect that they and their friends are to regard sleep and fatigue as non-existent; when activity is transferred from the troikas to the Neva, which is covered with small steamers, and when there is a life and brightness on the river which only St. Petersburg knows.

It is a peculiarity of the Russian character, or

rather of the people of St. Petersburg, that they adore rushing and storming onwards for no ostensible reason. In London the everlasting hurry of the city man has a great and powerful goal—the earning of money. The proverb, "Time is money," was invented by an Englishman. The same thing holds good in America, added to the device, "We must never let ourselves be done." In Petersburg men and vehicles rush and hurry, but without aim, simply for the pleasure of doing it! Perhaps they wish to compensate themselves by this for the retrograde condition of their national development! Perhaps, however, it is merely the expression of a superfluity of strength which, hemmed in in other ways, thus finds its relief!

One sees in this remarkable people more contradictory traits of character than in any other. To a stranger each person is as much of an enigma as the whole people; good-natured even to sacrifice, yet withal cruel and without compassion; clever and with a brilliant mind, and at the same time capable of doing the maddest and most stupid things; courageous and ready to do heroic deeds, yet capable of cowardly lying in order to evade some trivial unpleasantness; true and false, active and energetic, yet indescribably lazy; at once capable of the highest and lowest qualities, a mixture of the best and the worst—such is the Russian!

No other people, however, has such a mingling of racial elements, and European, Asiatic, Aryan-Tartar-Mongolian peculiarities are mixed in this remarkable kingdom of the future. I repeat once more that all the curious features are to be found in each person as strongly as in the whole vast race.

I have no intention of increasing the quantities of description of journeys and impressions of Russia, and will only mention here what struck me most during my first stay in the country of the Tsar, and this was, the preference the people seemed to have for

light and brilliant colours, not alone in their dress, as every one knows, but in the painting of every object that is "paintable"; even the simplest peasants' sleighs had the horses' yokes and all the woodwork coloured in light green (evidently a favourite colour) which was pleasant to behold. Their wood-carving is both striking and beautiful, and on most of the wooden houses in the suburbs and country it is picked out in the gayest colours. The outward impressions, therefore, are bright and friendly — in spite of the desolate poverty reigning within.

There was enough to look at and to learn until the consummation of my Fate, which tapped at my door one day when I was sitting in my drawing-room alone, and a little bored.

Without thinking I called out "*Herein!*" and there it stood in the doorway, in the shape of the young man—whose name I had forgotten! It shot through my mind as I greeted him joyfully: "Ah! the young man from Kissingen! Lassalle's clever admirer of the Salzburg station!"

He had heard of my presence in Petersburg from a mutual friend; had come to see me; found no one in the ante-room, and here he was, asking laughingly if I wanted to write my memoirs now, and if I should dictate them to him?

No, indeed, I would not, but I would chat with him for a few hours with pleasure. I had found very few people in Petersburg who really interested me, so it happened that we were very soon deep in all sorts of problems. We talked till other guests were announced, and then it occurred to me again that I did not even know the name of my visitor.

I was ashamed to confess that I did not know it, after such an intimate conversation, for I had spoken to him very openly about myself and my life.

I then thought of a little ruse and said, "Let us send a telegram to the friend who invited us together at Kissingen, and let us both sign it."

"Yes, let us," he agreed,

I wrote and signed, and pushed the paper over to him for his signature, with the remark that we could send it at once from the hotel—but he folded it up and said quietly, "I am sorry I must go at once. I will take it with me to the post-office *en passant*." He left me once more without my having found it out!

My friends laughed at me for having sat hours on end with a "nameless one" who nevertheless had turned into an "intimate one," and whom I did not know!

One of those who had been announced had greeted him, Russian fashion, as "Sergei y Egorowitsch"—therefore I presumed he knew his surname.

"Well, Prince W., what is his name?" I asked, after they had teased me quite enough.

"Well! *Sergei Egorowitsch!* I don't know more than that. I meet him at Court, and in all the circles of the *grand monde*. His friends all call him by that name. I know nothing more."

So it remained for a few days until at last Prince W. said to me that he had found out at the Minister Timoschew's, where they both visited, that the name of my dark unknown friend was *Schewitsch*; he was of very good family, with three brothers, one of them in the Embassy in Rome, one Governor of a big district in the South; he himself was in the Senate, and in consequence in the Government service.

The name which has now been my own for so long was communicated to me thus, amid laughter and jokes, and I said, "Well, after all this trouble and these obstacles, I won't forget it again!"

CHAPTER XXXII

I NEVER did forget it again, for out of this seemingly trivial beginning there arose a mighty love—one that has defied every obstacle, and has risen victorious over every sacrifice, which even to-day, after more than thirty years, is proof against dangers, storm, shipwreck, and struggles, and which every new misfortune only serves to rivet more firmly.

For the time being, it was a sort of good-fellowship, such as I have often enjoyed during my life with eminent men.

If life means love, it was only now that I began to live! It is true that in the beginning I did not recognise the tender shoot that reared its head among the entangled weeds. It had to grow first, and flourish, in order to show what a mighty tree was to spring from this apparently insignificant plant. I took no notice of it yet, and did not foresee that it was to be the most valuable and perfect one in the garden of my life.

However, the Great Gardener, of whom we know nothing, took care of the tender little plant, shielded it, reared it, and soon proved to me how weatherproof and strong it was, in spite of its early frailty. Neither storm nor lightning could kill it, nay, could even bend it!

One evening a little incident, very characteristic of the Russian people, happened.

I had promised to drive with my present husband to the Casino ball for the nobility. As these delights

commenced in St. Petersburg in the middle of the night, I decided to go to the opera first. My coachman, who had been with me for a long time, was a good, trustworthy man, so I permitted my footman, who was not very strong, and whom I needed later for the ball, to remain at home for the first part of the evening.

I had arranged with Serge that we should sup at home before going to the ball. I drove off, wrapped up in thick furs and fur rugs, in a light *décollete* ball-dress, with openwork silk stockings and satin shoes.

It will soon be understood why I mention all this. As I had left my footman at home, I did not put on the usual fur boots over my ball-slippers, not wishing to take them off alone, so I pushed my feet into a fur foot-warmer. After the third act, I told the porter to call my carriage. It drove up, and I got in, saying, "Home!" The porter arranged my rugs and foot-warmer, and off we went. The windows were thickly covered with frost, and I took no notice where the carriage was going. It was only when, according to my calculations, we should have arrived at home, that I breathed on the glass to reconnoitre. I could distinguish nothing, and as the horses were galloping, I troubled no more.

At last the carriage stood still. I opened the door—no house in sight as far as the eye could reach, only snow, ice, and snowflakes descending softly, ceaselessly.

"Iwan," I called out in horror. "Iwan! where are we?" No answer! Snow! Silence!

The horses started again. I looked out of the open carriage-door, in spite of the cold which froze my breath; they turned once or twice in a circle, then stood still, their long tails sweeping the snow; and without a sound my good Iwan fell like a log from his box into the snow.

In a moment everything was clear to me. He

was hopelessly drunk and I was quite alone, in my satin slippers and ball-dress, in 27 degrees of cold, in an absolutely unknown region, with nothing but snow all around. Even if I had been able to swing myself upon the box with my long train and many lace petticoats, I should not have known where to drive to, as I could hardly see anything for the falling snow. It was an appalling situation.

I tried first to wake Iwan by throwing snow-balls at his face, but as this consisted almost exclusively of hair and beard, it was not very effective. I stood in the snow with my skirts over my arm, shivering with the cold, as my fur only protected the upper part of me. Every minute the horses might become impatient and run away. What then? I threw a fur rug on the snow in front of the horses' heads, and standing on it I held them. Then with all my strength I called out for help. Minute after minute passed, and I remained in my terrifying solitude. Again and again I called out. At last—at last, I saw a man running towards me! "Heaven be praised!" fell from my lips. I gave him a few roubles at once, explained the situation as well as I could, pointed out the drunken coachman, and asked him if he could drive me to the town.

Yes, he could! Heaven be thanked!

Then, half afraid and entirely frozen, I got into the carriage, and entrusted myself with beating heart to the guidance of this unknown man. In such moments of terror I have always found people better than one imagines—better, more helpful, more useful.

My young muschik drove me home quite safely, and every one was waiting for me in the greatest excitement. He told the footman where he had found me—also where the coachman was snoring, softly embedded in the snow, and whence, after my carriage had been taken to the stables, he was fetched.

He slept for two whole days, and then appeared

before me bitterly repenting his behaviour and imploring and obtaining forgiveness! I was sure he would not do it again, and I was not mistaken. No doubt the terrible cold and his careless Russian temperament had tempted him to drink.

After supper, and having warmed my half-frozen extremities, I changed my dress, and we drove off in another carriage to the smart ball, which was like most others. I will mention another original episode of my St. Petersburg life.

I occupied the first *étage* in a very nice house, the proprietor of which, as he was an extremely good cook, provided the tenants with board. I therefore kept no servants beyond my footman and my maid—the coachman and carriage were hired monthly.

Above and below me the flats were occupied by other pensionnaires, and meals were served either in one's own private room, or at the public table. I had both, according to my fancy, and at the table d'hôte I met a charming Frenchman, Baron Meritens by name. This acquaintance soon ripened into a friendship, which was based on mutual interests and lasted many years.

Outside the town, upon the so-called islands by the sea, our host possessed a pretty villa called "Datsche," where I passed my summer months. The Baron and other Frenchmen generally came out to dinner, and we all amused ourselves very much during the excellent meals by witty conversation.

The day of which I speak was in the early summer, and we were still in town. I sent to tell our host I would dine at table d'hôte to-day, when he entered my room with a mysterious air. "Ah, Madame la Princess," he began; "I have come to make a big request, but it is a special occasion."

"Well?" I asked curiously.

"Madame la Princess appreciates good cooking, and is one of the few ladies who understands it. To-day I am giving a dinner out there, in the garden of

my Datsche, to which I have invited the first chefs of St. Petersburg, the Emperor's chef, the chef of the late Empress Nicolaus, who now has the Donon Restaurant, the chef of the Dusseaux Restaurant—in brief, eight old masters of the highest culinary art! I have composed a menu worthy of these masters, and some of them are sending a few dishes which they have composed themselves for us to judge and taste. It will be a unique occasion. I thought it might interest Madame la Princess not to let it pass, and we should all feel so highly honoured if——"

I accepted, on the condition that Baron Meritens and Herr von Schewitsch should accompany me. The Baron, to whom my host went at once, accepted immediately, and so did my present husband. At two o'clock we drove out to the islands.

We found there an assemblage of gentlemen who quite cut out my two aristocratic cavaliers: all of them were dressed and becurled as if they had just stepped out of the frames of old portraits of Emperors. They were all old, with coiffures *à l'aile de pigeon*, broad batiste neckerchiefs as cravats (the old Emperors indeed wore a jabot), and one almost expected knee-breeches and buckled shoes. Their tone and behaviour were just as distinguished, measured, and full of dignity.

My companions and I glanced delightedly at each other. I always liked old people and original situations, so was quite in my element.

The table was tastefully arranged with elaborate old crystal, silver and flowers, and a row of ten or more glasses before each plate showed that the cellar was to offer just as exceptional enjoyments as the kitchen.

I sat next the oldest of them, who had been the chef of the Empress and was now that of the Donon house. Opposite sat my two friends. Our host hardly sat down at all, as he had too much to do with the secrets of his menu and his wine list.

What a menu! Unfortunately I did not keep it; but as the dishes were evolved from the spontaneous genius of their creators, no one could have hoped to copy them in anything like their pristine perfection.

Of course, nothing was eaten in the usual way: each mouthful was subjected to a rigorous test, and was allowed to melt on the tongue, accompanied by a polite though severe criticism. The most refined *petits plats* were greeted with delight, and thoroughly enjoyed. As a matter of course, truffles, mushrooms, asparagus, and green estragon played a great rôle in the flavouring of these delicate little dishes. There was purée of asparagus, and *mousse à la Périgord*, and white chickens' livers! Even the wisest of these judges could not guess what gave the extraordinary flavour to the tender, delicate things one could hardly term "livers"!

At last the secret came out. They had been soaked in champagne, flavoured with estragon, made up in moulds, and were served now as these exquisitely refined snow-white *foies de poulardes*.

Many other equally delicious dishes followed; one would have been absolutely bewildered and fatigued if the conversation of these old "princes of the kitchen" had not proved so amusing and instructive.

For instance, I said I did not consider *karviol* (cauliflower) a delicate vegetable. At this, my old neighbour (the ex-Empress's chef) tapped his long, white, carefully tended finger-tips together, in sign of applause. "Bravo! Bravo! This shows a most cultivated and correct taste. Cauliflower is a vegetable which can only be eaten by a connoisseur after the most careful preparation. If laid in water, it always keeps its unpleasant taste; I always soak it in milk for some hours, as then——" and here followed a most complicated treatment, which ended with, "Only, *no* white sauce to it, but (and this is the difficulty!) which of all you gentlemen can prepare

a really perfect *beurre* (*noisette* hazel-nut butter)? All the chefs and cooks I ever had to deal with could never understand it. *Beurre noisette* must be *felt*, it cannot be learnt, and, without it, cauliflower is a horror! This was also the opinion of my illustrious mistress the Empress—and *she* understood."

Among other things we had asparagus with all kinds of wonderful sauces. The old man chuckled with delight and said, turning to his colleagues, "Do any of you know how to prepare a good asparagus bouillon? I am sure you don't! I was obliged to serve it daily at her late Majesty's table, and when the great lady was dead, her son, our most gracious Emperor Alexander II., summoned me to his presence, kissed me on the forehead—*here* (he pointed with his long first finger to a spot between his white *ailes de pigeon*), thanked me, and said, 'Without your asparagus bouillon, my dear chef, my beloved mother would never have been able to live so long!' That was the greatest moment of my life. A moment *any* chef might be proud of!"

This extraordinary meal lasted until six o'clock in the evening, and we found it more amusing than many a society dinner. It resulted in most delightful consequences for me. From that day, whenever I entered one of the great Petersburg restaurants with friends, or with my present husband, the waiters flew at once to the "master"—my old kitchen "prince"—and they could not do enough for me.

The old man had promised me at the cooks' dinner to prepare with his own hands *des pêches à la Bourdaloue*, as well as *perdreaux truffés sautés en casserole*, and these, as well as other rare delicacies, were placed on the table before me by the old man himself, in silver casseroles.

When I dined there for the last time before my departure from Petersburg, the old master prepared a farewell supper worthy of a Lucullus, and our parting was almost tragic.

One more episode of this period.

During the autumn of '75 certain engagements compelled me to go to Belgrade. At that time the Servian capital was a wild little town consisting chiefly of wooden huts, and a few good stone buildings. The streets were miserably paved, and dirty. My windows looked on the market-place, which was the rendezvous of all the gentlemen. They looked most picturesque in their national costume, and I noticed the same here as in Corfu, that the male sex of these races is the handsomer. Maybe the women age so quickly that one hardly sees them during the short time their beauty lasts. I wondered why this was not the case in Roumania, where the women are generally handsomer than the men.

Yet it was here in Belgrade that I witnessed the entrance of personified beauty in the person of Queen Natalie. Servia was still a principality, and Prince Milan and his young wife were both ideally handsome beings. I can see them now, so young, tall and slender, with such noble features and form—and, to all appearances, loving each other so sincerely! I seem to hear, as so often is the case in human love and marriage, "They went forth like gods, and how did they return?" Everything that looked so bright that autumn, in the golden Southern sunshine, ended, —how? In humiliation and sorrow, in blood and misery!

At that time, however, all was brightness, and this marriage had even its comic side.

None of the Court officials seemed to know how to place the guests at dinner according to their rank. A capital idea struck one of them, viz. to place them *alphabetically*! Naturally the most appalling contre-temps resulted. The Austrian Consul-General, whose name began with a W, was placed after a small official whose initial was A! The Russian Prince R. sat far below a nobody with an initial D.

All the foreign diplomats laughed heartily after-

wards, except a few, who considered they ought to feel offended in the name of the country they represented!

Another thing struck me at the time—it was the difference in the ideas of family morality which existed in the two neighbouring countries of Servia and Roumania. In Wallachia the most exaggerated Parisian manners and customs were the order of the day; every man had a love-affair with his neighbour's wife, and vice versa, this being not only tolerated, but sanctioned by society, although the influence of beautiful Queen Elizabeth, the revered Carmen Sylva, has done much to modify this. One saw nothing of this in Belgrade. Here, although not exactly European, quite respectable family life reigned. I, at least, heard no *chronique scandaleuse* during my six weeks' stay there. Such things were the privilege of the royal dynasty, the couple who then adored each other—Milan and Natalie—and later on, Alexander and Draga.

I returned to Petersburg and gave myself up entirely to my great love.

A strange incident occurred in connection with this journey to Belgrade, and had very Russian consequences for me.

My present husband came to meet me in Prague. We travelled together as far as Berlin, where we remained a short time in the Hôtel de Russie. His duties called him to Petersburg a few days before me.

A long time after I had settled down again on the borders of the Neva, and winter had returned, a visitor asked me one day, "What has the secret police to do with you?"

"What do you mean?" I replied, astonished.

"Because a policeman has just been inquiring of your dwornik (sort of butler) who visits you, and what letters you receive!"

I was indignant, turned to my friend Mesentzow, who merely said, "Nonsense, the gentleman is

mistaken. Inquiries are always made now and then about foreigners."

I soon forgot the incident, as I heard nothing further.

The following spring I went on a long theatrical tour to Berlin. Sergei y Egorowitsch, my young friend, telegraphed to me that he would come and visit me at Easter. I met him at the station in a carriage, and we drove gaily to the Hôtel de Rome where I lived.

Serge's room was a good distance from mine, but on the same *étage*. I accompanied him there, and we forgot the time in our animated conversation. After two hours it occurred to me to return to my own rooms, to give him time to bathe, etc.

I went down the long corridor, and was astonished to find a policeman and several other men there. This unusual sight in a first-class Berlin hotel caused me to stand still and look after them. What can describe my surprise when I saw them stop before Serge's room! The men entered, and the policeman remained outside.

I flew there; the policeman let me pass, and I entered the room just as one of the men put his hand on Serge's shoulder and said, "You are arrested." I saw Serge push his arm away, and heard him call out indignantly, "Beware, if you touch me!"

"What on earth is the matter?" I called out; then one of the men asked me excitedly, "That is Walter, is it not?"

"Who is Walter?" I said, half amused, half curious. I was calmed on hearing the name, for I was sure the scene could have no personal reference to him.

"You know very well who Walter is, madam," was the irritable answer. "He ran away last November with 800,000 roubles, and you know it very well!"

I was really laughing now, and replied, "No, indeed, I know nothing about it at all."

Here Serge interrupted them, and said with decision, "Will you accompany me to the Russian Embassy, where I can get myself identified?"

At this they grew more civil and said, "Yes, certainly, if that is possible." The policeman was told to walk a good distance behind them, and I saw them depart without the slightest apprehension, for I knew the Ambassador was a friend of the Schewitsch family, and Count B. Secretary of the Embassy, a personal friend of Serge's, so of course the misunderstanding would be cleared up at once. However, for greater safety, I sent a messenger to my friend Baron von K., who had left the navy long since, and was now first Secretary of the Embassy, and an important person. Half an hour later he came to see me.

I must now relate what was at the bottom of the whole story. As already stated, I had fetched Serge at the station. We had both lived the previous autumn at the Hôtel de Russie, and the day we had left the hotel porter had received a photograph of the Russian "Walter," together with a warrant for his arrest, for which a reward of a hundred pounds was offered.

The resemblance to Serge von Schewitsch was most striking. The clever porter then thought to himself, "We shall soon catch him. He was staying here for several days, and knows the Frau von Racowitza very well." He went to the police station and notified this, hence the surveillance of me and my correspondence. "Walter" was not discovered, and in Russia none dreamt of mistaking him for the well-known Schewitsch. When, however, the same porter saw us together again at the station, he rushed at once to the police with the announcement, "Now 'Walter' has fallen into the trap! Frau von Racowitza fetched him herself from the station, and they are both staying at the Hôtel de Rome," where the arrival of the police was the result of this denunciation. We heard all this later.

Baron K., to whom I now told my story, said, "The Ambassador and Count B. left early this morning for the Easter holidays, but that won't matter. Schewitsch has got his passport, and the affair will be arranged at once."

I now became very uneasy. "No, my friend, he hasn't a passport, otherwise——"

"But that is impossible! How did he cross the border? How did he get leave? He is in the Senate, in the State service!"

I laughed, saying, "*Il y a des accommodements avec le bon Dieu!* He will not be here long, only just over Easter, therefore it was not necessary to get leave, and——"

"Yes, but the frontier? How did he manage to cross without a passport?" repeated the Baron, putting on his official air.

"Oh, don't worry me, my dear friend! He had a friend on the frontier."

"Aha!" he said, smiling amiably. "*You* tell me who this friend is, and I will get your Serge out of this mess."

"You know as well as I do that I will not do this," I replied indignantly.

"Very well, then, I can't help you. We cannot have such lax people on the frontier."

"Then the matter must take its course. I will not mention the friend's name!"

We quarrelled for a time over this, but when the Baron saw he could not get the name out of me, his old friendship prevailed, and he went over to the Embassy to arrange the affair.

It was high time he got there, for the following scene had taken place. As the Ambassador and Count B. were not there, Serge had asked for Baron K., and as he also was absent he said, "Who *is* here then?"

"Only Baron B."

This was the only member of the Embassy who

was unknown to Serge, but he suddenly remembered that this was a close friend of his brother in Rome, and as they were very much alike, although his brother was nine years older than he, he built his hopes on this. Accompanied by the secret criminal police officer, he was shown in, and began with the words, "Baron B., who am I?"

The latter looked at him in amazement, then said, "I don't know you personally, but judging from your likeness to Dimitri Schewitsch, I should imagine you were a Schewitsch."

"Do you hear?" said Serge triumphantly to his persecutor; but the latter said quietly, "May I speak to you alone a moment, Baron?"

The two disappeared into the ante-room, and when they came out Baron B. was cool in his manner, and said, "Well, I hardly know you personally, and the photograph of this Mr. Walter——"

At that moment Baron K. appeared and saved the situation. In spite of his explanation, the policeman cast several mistrustful glances at his criminal. However, after he had been convinced of his mistake, he made what amends he could by showing the picture of the desired "Walter." My husband was so taken aback at the resemblance, that he has said to me even lately, "If I had not known that I was *not* Walter, I should really have believed I was, when I saw that photograph." The whole business ended in a laugh.

Now that the situation was clear, I was apologised to verbally and in writing for the police surveillance. The mistake on the part of the police was of the greatest advantage to the *real* Walter, who was only discovered at his death. He must have been a very genial creature, for he had arranged his flight from the Moscow bank in the following manner.

Being a member of the bank, he stole 800,000 roubles, then invited all the directors to a splendid farewell supper, as he intended going abroad. They all came, and all accompanied him to the station.

He was off. As he enjoyed the unlimited confidence of them all, his theft was only discovered some weeks later, then *we* protected him; and four years later he was found in Naples in the direst poverty and ill-health. He had gambled the money away at Monte Carlo!

There was an amusing little sequel in Berlin to the scene in the Embassy. Serge was sitting next day in the Unter den Linden at Kranzlers', and was drinking his coffee outside, when he noticed a man looking very much like a detective walking up and down, and looking very sharply at him. He got up, paid, and went straight up to the man, nodded to him, and said, "Yes, yes! You are quite right! I *am* 'Walter'!"

The man, taken aback, stammered, "Yes, but how?"

"It's all right," continued Serge. "I'll go with you to the police station. I'm tired of it all."

The poor policeman, quite surprised, took him to the Molkenmarkt, and as soon as the door opened, the police official of the previous day recognised Serge at once, and jumped up, saying anxiously to the subordinate, "For goodness' sake, let the gentleman go! That isn't Walter. I've had enough unpleasantness about him."

The most comical result of this narrative was this, that Serge von Schewitsch had to get a certificate saying he was *not* Walter, because, no matter what precautions the police might take, the same mistake could happen elsewhere, as the police had telegraphed for "Walter" all over the world. He carried this absurd paper about with him for several years, and we and our friends have often laughed over it.

I might relate many more stories of my stay in the kingdom of the Tsar, but none that would be of any particular interest. My life there was more of an everyday kind, varied sometimes by journeys to the picturesque Baltic Sea provinces and Finland, and to Revel, with its delightful seashore.

CHAPTER XXXIII

I COULD not stand the damp climate of St. Petersburg. The proud Imperial city, as every one knows, is built on ground reclaimed from marsh land, and its emanations give fever and all sorts of illnesses to people unaccustomed to the air, so I decided to go to Paris with a woman friend. Not only did my health cause me to make this decision, which was no easy one, but I was going through a time of inward struggle that made this last sojourn in St. Petersburg one of the most difficult and responsible of my life.

I became daily more and more convinced that the feeling between me and my friend Serge must not be confounded with those which during so many years had played greater or lesser parts in my existence.

We had many a deep and serious talk on the subject together, and I also discussed it with friends, but we saw no possible solution for the passion that ruled us both.

I realised that our only salvation lay in parting. I knew my own nature, and parting had always served to cool any feeling I may have had. I judged my friend's character by that of most men ; his love would pass, he would turn to some one else, and a nice true friendship would remain to both of us. Therefore parting was best for him also.

During that sad time I passed my sleepless nights in weeping, in struggling, and trying to persuade myself. At last, as we then thought, reason was victorious. I left St. Petersburg, and I went to Paris

again, a paradise for most women, but a city which was never very sympathetic to me. I arrived there feeling very sad. The Imperial days were dead and gone, and with them most of my friends. Gone also were the glories of the beautiful Empress and her luxurious Court. All these changes fitted in well with my feelings.

I felt the parting from Serge as a deep sorrow, and I soon saw that nothing could cure me of it. My friends tried in the most good-natured way to make the time pass pleasantly, but it crept along so very slowly.

At that time, the late Albert Wolff, then critic of the *Figaro*—the most "Parisian of the Parisians" as he was called, although a German—sat with me for hours chatting over his brilliant *feuilletons*, but I had no heart for anything. For the first time in my life my whole being was nothing but longing.

Seeing that at the other end of the electric threads which bound our souls the same feelings prevailed, it was not surprising that our parting ended a few months after my arrival, and that my young friend appeared in Paris.

How happy I was!

When I said to him, "What next?" and he replied, "We will go to America," I was perhaps for the first time in my life absolutely and entirely happy.

After a few delightful days in Paris we went to London. I was charmed with the mighty city on the Thames, and found it just as sympathetic as I had found Paris the reverse.

We were lucky in the weather, and revelled in the splendid museums, galleries, and institutions of that most free of all monarchical countries. We could not stay long then, and went to Liverpool to catch the Cunard steamer, which, after a stormy crossing, landed us on March 1, 1877, at New York.

Two free and happy people!

PART VII

America—Arrival and first impressions—Offers for the stage —Some existence in New York—New friends; Joseph Keppler, Udo Brachvogel, and others—Journey to San Francisco—Meeting with Professor Carl Semper—San Francisco—The Chinese town—A night of serpents—Farewell to California—Towards the East.

CHAPTER XXXIV

YES indeed, two free and happy people landed in New York on that glorious March morning!

Behind us lay all conventions, all European social bonds. Before us lay life and all its possibilities! Neither of us knew a living soul in all this vast country. We were absolutely alone!

This was happiness.

. . . . .

It was 6 A.M. when we hurried on deck to greet our new home. Purple sunrise bathed the glorious bay in golden glowing colours, and yet the faint outline of the young moon was still visible in the sky. It was an entrancing sight, and all the Americans on board declared that it was only under the stars and stripes that there were such skies and such sunrises and sunsets.

I was reminded of an old superstition of the people: "If one sees sun and moon together in the heavens, then happiness is near."

We then disembarked. Our first impressions were "real" American.

I had fourteen trunks, containing long trains and theatre costumes. Whilst Serge and my maid, whom I had brought with me to New York, were preparing to open our boxes for the Customs, a voice said to them softly, "If you can pay me ten dollars, I will manage to get your things through unopened." He was bargained down to five dollars, and the affair was arranged.

In the meantime, I sat on one of the larger boxes awaiting results, when a long lean Yankee asked me whether I was here for the first time, and if I knew that a new President was elected to-day.

His name was *Hayes*, and it was very important to remember that name for the next four years. Hayes, then! I laughed, and was delighted to meet such a "real" one. Whilst we were driving to our hotel in the Fifth Avenue, I noticed for the first time a peculiarity that never ceased to strike us most unpleasantly, and this was that dead cats and dogs lay about in front of the big palatial buildings, and everywhere, before each house, stood ashbins, or sometimes only large or small open boxes. The desolate condition of the streets struck us (I fear it has not changed much at the present time). Presidents might come and go, this or that political party rise or fall—the dirt remained.

We were soon to make another disagreeable discovery. After staying a short time in the hotel, we went to a boarding-house, where the proprietor was at the same time editor of the largest theatrical newspaper. We liked him very much, but liked his wife less, and put down her rather familiar manner as being "real American." We thought fifty dollars a week for board and lodging, without light and firing, was cheap, for we had two large and one small room on one *étage*, and one upstairs for the maid. We heard afterwards that it was an abnormal price, and after that we lived for half that sum. At the time we did not know this, and as the food was good we remained.

Then came the following incident. I was to act for a charity, and wanted one of my best dresses. Everything was looked through, but the dress, trimmed with costly real lace, had vanished.

Two days later I had given my maid permission to go out; Serge was at the publishing offices of the great New York paper *The World*, where he had

found work, and I went out to be photographed with my dogs, a giant Newfoundland and a small terrier, both of which were splendid watch-dogs.

On my return home an hour later, I found Serge in the doorway. We went to our rooms together, and I saw at the first glance that my big iron jewel-case had been broken open, and the most valuable diamonds stolen. The empty cases alone gaped at me.

We immediately notified the theft to the police, but we never recovered anything. Probably the police were in collusion with the thieves. I never found out whether they had been stolen by the people in the house. Anyhow, we left this hospitable roof, and preferred to seek shelter under a less expensive one.

Immediately on our arrival, Serge had found employment on the staff of the aforementioned paper, by reason of his journalistic talents. He writes equally well in English, Russian, German, and French, and was highly appreciated at the time of the Russo-Turkish war, being an expert, perhaps the only one they had, in Russian affairs.

After the theatrical performance I have alluded to, in which I played one of my favourite rôles, that of Clotilde in Sardou's *Fernande*, I received offers from various quarters of the States. I had not intended including these in my plans, but nevertheless accepted very lucrative engagements for San Francisco, Milwaukee, and St. Louis, and went there late in the autumn.

From the first we made interesting acquaintances in the German Colony of New York; many of them became intimate friends later, and helped to make our often difficult time in America more agreeable and homelike.

First and foremost was the genial artist Joseph Keppler, and his dear little wife. He was an Austrian, and had begun life in an adventurous and poverty-stricken way. His father, a pastry-cook, had run

away from his mother, leaving her in absolute want with a family of little children, but even as a boy "Beppi" was an energetic and jolly lad. He wandered to Tyrol and Italy, and earned his food and wherewithal to travel by going into the farmers' houses and offering to paint the inmates in return for board and lodging. He declared that he had managed splendidly, and had had delightful times. I forget how it was he had come to America; anyhow, he was there, and after a short time had become famous as a clever artist.

Then he married his beautiful Pauline—a niece of the poet Pfav. When we first knew them and their hospitable house, Joseph Keppler, in conjunction with the rich printer Schwarzmann, had just founded the first German comic paper *Puck*. They had not the faintest idea, then, of the enormous fortune they would make out of this. They lived very comfortably and modestly with their children in a tiny house, but the evenings we often spent there with Udo Brachvogel and Leopold Schenk belong to the most intellectually charming hours of all my New York stay.

Udo Brachvogel, editor of one of the first German newspapers there, the *Belletristischen Journal*, was a delightful companion, as was also Leopold Schenk, the literary editor of *Puck*.

A year later *Puck* had that lightning success which is only possible in America, so that the proprietors of it with one stroke, as in a fairy tale, awakened in fairy castles. I remember with emotion how, when I made my first visit to the lovely Pauline in her magnificent castle high up on the Hudson, she said to me, "Oh, *Goldche*" (she called me this in her strong Swabian dialect), "I often think all this glory is a dream; it can't be true. I shall wake up one morning and find myself in my little house." But it was golden reality which, I believe, led later on to several millions.

About this time Joseph Keppler's name was mentioned so often in the States, that he received the following letter from the Far West :—

HONOURED SIR—If you were born in Vienna, and are the son of the pastry-cook Keppler who left his wife and children in 18— because he could not keep them, then you are my dear son Beppi, and I will soon call and see you, as I am thus—Your loving father, KEPPLER.

It may well be understood how this original letter amused the original artist, and how quickly he placed himself in communication with the author of his being, in order to allow him to participate in his quickly acquired wealth.

In that remarkable land one only needs to strike the right note for money-making, and it will then pour in with astounding rapidity.

But not everybody strikes the right note; and then he is ruined just as quickly, or joins the ranks of the millions who are striving, straining, and working in vain! The worst fate of all often awaits the people of gentle birth who go over there with the highest hopes. It is the most difficult of all for them, unless they arrive with a very big title and good recommendations, which may perhaps lead to a rich marriage. I do not speak of these "seekers of luck," but of poor young people, with whom something has gone wrong at home, and who are mostly of good education, which they find of no use to them.

How many such existences we saw go to pieces over there! I remember an offshoot of one of the oldest and most aristocratic Austrian families who was thankful to accept the post of night-watchman in one of the huge business houses in New York!

Those who understand horses are somewhat better off; well-set-up coachmen are always in demand. A young gentleman told me once how ashamed he felt on receiving his first tip. He said to himself, "Down with yourself, pride!"

Most of them become waiters, and are not so

badly off at that. I particularly call to mind two of these "shipwrecked ones," who—to a certain extent —had risen again.

One evening I was sitting with a friend from Paris in my little drawing-room at the Park Hotel in the German suburb of New York, Hoboken. We were talking French, when there was a knock at the door (I must remark that I am anticipating a few years in the narrative). I called out, "Come in." A well-built young man in a servant's working jacket came forward with a basket and coal-box, and presented himself with a perfect bow, as "Wilhelm—the new man-servant."

We took no further notice of him, and continued our conversation. I am passionately fond of animals, above all of dogs, and we were discussing the breed of my own three dogs, when it occurred to me that I had seen one that morning which I could not classify. I was describing it, always in French, when suddenly the man-servant, who was lighting the fire, turned round and said in most perfect French, "No doubt, Madame, it was one of the new breed of 'Stachelhunde'!"

At this we looked at him more closely, and I said, "Surely you were not born to your present occupation?"

It then turned out that he had been an officer, Baron W., and had to leave on account of debt. In Europe he had tried a wine business on the Rhine, and at last he found his way here. Here he had fared very badly, and had fallen as low as this.

He was an active, industrious, and very intelligent man, and soon rose to book-keeper in one of the large hotels. No doubt he has long since become a rich and respected man in the country of unlimited possibilities. A less satisfactory issue was in the case of the American existence of another poor aristocrat. I speak of Count B., who was turned out of the

highest Austrian State Service on account of his own family's intrigues against him.

When we first came to know the old gentleman, who was over sixty, he was eking out his living by giving music lessons to poorer members of the German Colony for fifty cents. He earned sufficient for one good meal a day, and was at least sheltered from the cold in a tiny room. When he was seventy-eight years of age, kind friends made a collection for him, and sent him back to Europe, where he died in his ninetieth year. I worked out his highly interesting life in a novel. It was one of the saddest and most awful destinies I have ever known.

We often met the dear old man at our friends'.

Austrians cling together more than Germans when they meet in a foreign land; therefore it was his own compatriots who tried to brighten the life of the "Old Count," as he was universally called.

An interesting, almost historical, name is that of the celebrated revolutionist of 1848, Dr. Hans Kudlich. There was little of the revolutionist to be seen in the prosperous doctor. His wife, a very remarkable woman, was a sister of Karl Vogt.

The Kudlichs' house, with a number of pretty children, was considered a hospitable meeting-place for all the educated Germans and Austrians, and every one was welcome who contributed to the general amusement. Music was cultivated there, as much as literature and science. Thus the circle in which we entered proved to be quite stimulating. Perhaps I had been spoilt in Europe by knowing the very leaders in every department, and here I only found those who were, as Joseph Keppler said of himself and others when I was admiring one of his works, "Oh! nonsense! We are all second class here. The first-class ones over yonder would never have let us get to the front, and they would have been quite right."

He was over-modest in speaking like this of

himself, because he was a great and true artist, and unfortunately quitted this life far too soon, but he was right as regards most of them. Therefore, although I made many friends among them, I felt myself intellectually, and especially artistically, in a sort of banishment over there!

CHAPTER XXXV

The time arrived for my tour in San Francisco. Much as I liked the prospect of the journey, and looked forward to all the new impressions that awaited me, it was with a heavy heart that I thought of my parting from Serge. Notwithstanding this, he refused to accompany me. During the short time of our stay in New York, he had already made a name for himself in American journalism, was a regular contributor to *The World* and *The Sun*, as well as to the principal monthly magazines; he wrote occasionally for *The Herald*, and did not wish to give it all up in order to travel merely as "husband to a theatrical star." I could not blame him for this. We had seen many examples of this species of gentleman, and, difficult as it was for me, we had to accommodate ourselves to it. Had I not been bound by my contract, I would have thrown over the whole Californian scheme; but I was bound, and so was he.

In those days the journey from New York to San Francisco lasted a week. My contract had provided that I should travel with every conceivable comfort, and this provision was carried out. Only those who have been through such experiences can imagine what it was.

Perhaps I have been a trifle spoilt, and am very fastidious in my ideas of luxury, but I cannot say that I found these American journeys as pleasant as all Americans seem to think they are. I disliked exceedingly being in company with so many people

day and night; and even when one paid for two beds—an upper and under berth—there was no privacy in these long sleeping-cars. Although the beds are twice as wide as those in European cars, they are divided from each other by curtains only, instead of doors, and as they take up the entire width of the carriage, one has either to encroach on one's neighbour's space, or to dress and undress in a kneeling posture. In brief, most unpleasant proximity exists in these badly ventilated carriages, where an absolutely pestilential atmosphere prevails. On the other hand, when one was not obliged to consider expenses, as was the case in this particular journey of mine, what comfort and luxury were at my disposal! I had a small drawing-room for my use with sofas arranged on three sides of it, which were turned into beds at night. In front of this room a wide platform abutted, provided with seats, from which—once the dull journey to Chicago was past—one could enjoy the glorious view. Being well stocked with eatables by my friends in New York, I travelled like a queen. There were no restaurant cars in those days, yet at every station at midday one could get a good meal—mostly, it is true, of the temperance kind as regards drink. Americans, who drink so much whisky and other spirits in general, consider it wicked to drink a glass of wine at meals in public. "Drinking," according to their ideas, must be done secretly. At family hotel parties they only serve iced water, which is so injurious to health.

I did not feel called upon to follow this habit. My little wine cellar, which was well stowed away in my basket, preserved me from this. I had to thank it also for an extremely interesting acquaintance.

On the second day of my journey I stood on my platform eating a sandwich, and sipping the sparkling wine that was in my glass, when, on the platform next mine, and attached to it as all American cars are, I noticed an elderly gentleman with grey hair

and beard, who was a thorough type of the German scholar.

He watched my little feast with an amused smile, but I thought I saw a little envy in his blue eyes, so I called out, smiling also, and in German, "Will you have some? I am very well provided, and shall be pleased to share it with you." He bowed, and replied, laughing, "With pleasure, if gnädige Frau will allow it!"

I signed to him to come over, and played the hostess as well as I could with my eatables and drinkables. He enjoyed them immensely, and proved to be a most delightful companion.

When the meal was ended, he said, "Now, *cartes sur table*! Of course I knew at the first glance who *you* were, my beautiful, hospitable one! Now I must introduce myself to you. Professor Karl Semper from Würzburg, Professor of Natural History, invited by American Universities to come over here and lecture in various halls. I went to Boston first, then to Baltimore, and now I am going to San Francisco."

We were at once on well-known ground, and found we had a number of mutual friends and interests. When the Professor found out that I was especially absorbed in his own particular science of zoology, his delight knew no bounds. The journey became a very memorable one for me; for everything we saw was now explained to me by him. The hordes of buffaloes and antelopes in the vast prairies, the prairie dogs, whose strange little huts looked like tiny villages; in short, all the manifold animal life of the Rocky Mountains, the Sierra Nevada, and the vast steppes became doubly interesting under Semper's animated description.

In those days, the traveller was confronted with large hordes of Indians, who crowded round, begging or offering for sale their leather work, bast, or bark. Cards, tobacco-pipes, and fire-water were never

wanting. They are repulsively dirty and ugly beings, but intelligent looking, and with a sad expression.

I was struck with several strange things on the journey. High up on the Sierra Nevada there was a solitary inn and (as everywhere) a church. One got a very good lunch there, and it was here I saw the first Chinaman as waiter. He made quite a clean and sympathetic impression in his snow-white garments, long pig-tail, with his polite manners, and soft English. A Chinaman can never pronounce an "r"; for instance he always says "Ame*l*ika," and "*l*ice" instead of *r*ice.

At the following station there were two Chinamen waiters, and at the next one three or four, and so on. They were pushed into the country like a wedge—very cautiously and cunningly, but steadily increasing in numbers. When I returned to New York after nine months, they had even reached that city, and founded one or two laundries—their speciality—there.

In San Francisco I spoke of what I had noticed to the Russian Consul-General there, Baron von R., who was an authority on Chinese immigration. He said I was quite right; this wedge-like occupation of other countries by the pig-tailed sons of the Celestial Empire looked quite a simple and harmless non-political thing. Personally, he considered the yellow danger a most threatening one. He was right! Everybody knows the trouble the United States had in checking the influx, and what strict immigration laws they were obliged to pass.

As far as Omaha the landscape was not particularly interesting, but from that point I never left my window, and enjoyed the magnificent views with all my senses.

Salt Lake City, with its dome by the sea, and the surrounding hills, impressed me with its ideal beauty. Something very amusing happened here. I was longing for some apples and nuts, and was shown an

enormous store. The wealthiest grocer in wealthy Utah stood himself behind his counter, and asked me in English, which savoured strongly of the Swabian dialect, what I wanted.

When I answered him in German, he was hugely delighted. By the time I had finished my purchases, the no longer youthful Mormon had arrived at a declaration of love and offer of marriage: "I have looked for such a wife as you—beautiful, fascinating, and amusing. I am very rich; you shall have your own villa, your horses and carriages. I have only two other wives, and I am very difficult to please!"

The thought of the "two other wives" was quite enough for me. I smiled, shook hands with my wooer, and told him I would think the matter over. For the moment I was bound by contract to go to San Francisco.

"All right," he said, "business is business!" Laughingly I left him—never to meet again.

I was keenly interested in the Mormons—perhaps owing to this little personal episode, or perhaps because of the striking contrast between the utterly different laws of this state and those generally observed in the northern states, where form and exterior circumstances played such a great part. I endeavoured on every possible occasion to find out more about them.

The genial Mormon chief Brigham Young, the successor of the eminent founder John Smith, was just dead. The state was in deep mourning, without leader or counsel. Brigham Young had had twenty-one wives, from his oldest spouse down to the members of the present generation. The old one, however, had shared his regency in the most capable manner. This flock of women were now leaderless, and I heard that the successor to the throne of the "Archangel" (I do not recollect his name) had intended annexing the whole of them as his own.

Nowadays the laws of the United States have

enforced very rigid measures against several of the main customs of the "Holy Ones" (as they prefer to call themselves) of the Salt Lake.

Polygamy, especially, is not allowed to the same extent. This, however, is no easy task, as polygamy is closely interwoven with their most sacred doctrines. Their religion is a curious blend of all known existing religions. They adopt the ancient Indian (and specially Vedic) idea of reincarnation, and teach polygamy like the Koran, interweaving both in the strangest manner. It was a sacred duty to bring into the world as many children as possible, there being so many souls in need of a body or "tabernacle" as medium of reincarnation. Like the ancient Indian doctrines, they believe that every reincarnating spirit returns to earth in a higher state of development, and it is one of the most laudable things to assist him to do this. Therefore, one man was entitled to as many "sealed" wives as he was able to support, whereas the lady was sealed to him by the fact of sexual intercourse.

Adultery was most rigorously punished, and considered a terrible disgrace. A wife may be "sealed" for all time and eternity, or only for time. The former entitles her to all celestial happiness.

This amalgamation of all conceivable ethical doctrine with material interests is found, by the way, among many sects of the United States. For instance among the Shakers, the Oneidists, and in the Theosophical offshoots founded by Mrs. Tingley in California.

Deeply fanatical religious feeling is side by side in these settlements with the keenest business capacities. All these sects have this in common, that the basis of their religion has been imparted to the founders in supernatural visions.

The Mormon religion was revealed to John Smith in a dream, which told him to dig beneath a certain hill, where he would find metal plates upon which

the new law would be written. He did this, found the plates, but could not read what was engraved upon them. Close by, there lay a magic pair of spectacles, the glasses of which were replaced by precious stones. By means of these he read the writing, which became their sacred doctrine. His successor, Brigham Young, completed this by means of revelation received in a state of ecstasy.

The Shakers base their belief, which is not unlike the Christian in many ways, on the revelations of Anna Lee, who prohibited marriage and all sexual union, as all disasters were supposed to spring from it. She placed chastity as the first principle of their community, whose members are recruited from auxiliaries and proselytes. It has existed for a century and a half, and the members are esteemed for their honesty, their incomparable farming, and sound business capability.

The same applies to the "Oneida community," only they possess quite wonderful sexual laws, based also on the revelation of their founder (whose name I do not know). They also forbid marriage and sexual intercourse. In order to secure the existence of this community to posterity, the elders annually select a couple, who live together for a year for the procreation of children. The children are taken from the mothers a few days after birth. She is allowed to nourish the child in the general nursery. From this it is handed to the universal education board, which is supposed to make all the children, none of whom know their parents, good citizens, thorough workmen, and God-fearing people. All grown-up people are "elders" of every child; individual parentage is immaterial. They never become soldiers; war and combat are contrary to their laws, as is the case with the Mormons.

The couples who have lived together for one year are either interchanged or remain alone. Love, in the usual sense, is out of the question among them.

No pressure is exercised to keep the members faithful to their community, but they seldom leave it.

I must add that in Oneida work is distributed in a true communistic spirit; everybody does everything, *i.e.* every year as soon as the marriages are concluded, work is distributed afresh, according to the capabilities and knowledge of the individual. So and so many members are allotted to agriculture—others to cattle farming, dairy work, etc.

The women also have their appointed tasks, which contribute to the welfare of the whole, such as nursing, rearing, and educating children, kitchen duties, etc. Meals are partaken of together in huge palatial halls, in spite of the little community being simple in dress and customs. Their cleanliness is as noted as that of the Quakers.

Another sect exists in South Texas, under the name of *O as pe.* It was at the end of the 'seventies that a few people who were seeking the "ideal" united; amongst them was the famous Dr. Tanner, who was the first to invent the art of "hunger," based on the imitation of Christ's fasting; this enforced forty days' abstinence from food. The adherents comprised all classes, from University men to simple farmers. There were about forty members, including twelve women. They solicited a piece of virgin soil from the Government, which they themselves cultivated by working together. This was difficult, as the soil there is heavy and clayey.

They cultivated their own wheat and vegetables, built their houses, and lived according to their "ideal." They supported this claim on a book of revelation, communicated by a trance "medium"; this, curiously enough, is nearly identical with the ancient mystic doctrine of the Indian theosophists, of which the unlettered Californian medium could have had no knowledge whatever.

They named their settlement *O as pe.* The idea of the name is, that the sounds are the

same as the first that fall from human lips, from the inhaling and exhaling of the breath, and the ensuing sigh of relief. *O as pe* is a most extraordinary book of theosophical teaching clothed in the old Bible English. But the most interesting part of these settlers' "ideal" philosophy was that of education.

Although communistic, their inclinations were completely monastic. They were against all sex relationship amongst themselves. Without knowing it, they followed the highest teachings of Buddha, for, besides being strict vegetarians, they abstained from alcohol, and were opposed to the drinking of tea and coffee.

They avoided all distractions of outer life, desired to banish all sexual love, and only to recognise that highest divine love towards man.

Every year, one man and one woman were sent out of their midst to the great cities, into the centres of sin and crime, to pick up tiny, innocent, and, if possible, new-born children; those who were deserted by their parents, the disinherited ones of the earth, who, like stray blossoms, had no soil wherein to grow and flourish.

Their dream was to take such infants (the sole condition being that they should be clean and free from hereditary taint) and transplant them to their own isolation from the world. They were never to behold sin and crime; they were to grow up amidst healthy surroundings, with simple food and properly apportioned work, and thus were to become through bodily and spiritual purity, thoroughly virtuous beings.

Mrs. Tingley founded in South California a veritable paradise for theosophists, who, however, were obliged completely to submit themselves to her. She teaches pure theosophy, as may be read by those who interest themselves in this in my little book, *Wie ich mein Selbst fand*, published by A. Schwetschke und Sohn, Berlin.

She formerly professed to be the reincarnation of H. P. Blavatsky, and rules her little pattern kingdom—which is lavishly decorated with temples and other buildings, parks, and hygienic comforts and luxury—with a rod of iron.

After this long digression, which may have seemed to some not devoid of interest, I return to the moment which inspired it, namely to the comic offer of marriage of my Mormon merchant.

Professor Semper was highly amused at this conquest, won during my apple transaction! He shortened my journey by many an interesting story of his own youth. Once when he was butterfly-hunting far away in the South Sea Islands, he was taken prisoner by a wild tribe of cannibals, and was kept there for two or three years in an absolute state of nature—otherwise he was well treated.

The tragic part was that Semper's wife had accompanied him on this South Sea Expedition. She had stayed behind in one of the larger towns of the more civilised groups of islands in order to execute in their true colouring certain necessary illustrations of collections they had made together. She expected her husband back in a few months.

When these had elapsed without his appearing, she made countless unsuccessful efforts to find some traces of his whereabouts; these were inspired by the most tender solicitude. At last, after indescribable exertion and complicated expeditions on horseback, she eventually discovered a trace through the very blacks who had transported him in their boats to their island and had made him a prisoner.

With the aid of the British and Dutch Governments (I forget to which of them the island was subject), she managed to find her husband and bring him back. But they had been terrible years for both of them, they had blanched their dark hair and left indelible traces on their features. Her husband

had run the daily risk of being devoured by his friendly "hosts"!

He was only saved by the knowledge of their language, and by relating to them all sorts of stories about Europe and our civilisation, all of which appeared to them entirely incredible.

CHAPTER XXXVI

While engaged in these fascinating conversations, we reached California. We arrived towards evening in San Francisco, and as the town lies on a peninsula, it could, like Venice, only be reached by train over a mighty bridge which is thrown across the arm of the sea. Thus one could see the town at its best. When I look back on my ecstasy over the beautiful "'Frisco," I become quite melancholy in thinking that one is obliged to say of the whole of this regal city, "It *was* once." At this time it still lived—that proud guardian of the Golden Gate, and I was never so enchanted with any city in the world.

The only place that made upon me anything approaching the same impression was Edinburgh; only here the glorious southern colouring and tropical vegetation were lacking. Neither Naples, Corfu, nor Geneva can compare with San Francisco.

It seems like fairyland, and the view from one of the streets upon the heights was simply ideal. The lofty mountains, the glorious Pacific Ocean, which from afar rolled its deep majestic waves thither, and the incomparably gorgeous colouring, were simply entrancing. And now, it all lies in ruins!

This most beautiful of all cities, over which nature poured in profusion its richest treasures and greatest marvels, as if it wished by these to console the beautiful thing for its early death, did not even exist for a century!

In 1848 hardly anything was there except a few huts in a wild romantic district; it was thirst for gold and gleaming glory of the discovered metal that built up this marvellous city to brief magnificence and quickly sinking happiness.

I may say that the intoxication of California seized me with all its might, and if only Serge—whom I missed dreadfully—had been with me, I daresay I should never have left it. Whoever has lived in this lost earthly paradise of San Francisco must retain the same longing in his heart for this ideal dwelling-place as did the first couple when they were driven out of the Garden of Eden. The flaming sword here became the sea of fire, and like the ancient legend, when everything grew to monstrous proportions, the simile could be applied even more appropriately. Mourning for this glorious city makes one lament its destruction.

Even if we read to-day in astonishment and admiration that the great financiers of New York's Wall Street are building it up almost upon its smoking ruins, how they contemplate rebuilding, and in still greater splendour and magnificence than before—of course one believes them, for what could Californian gold not achieve when coupled with American astuteness! But they will never be able to bestow on it the fascination of the first San Francisco. Its chief charm did not consist in its incomparable position on the Golden Gate in the midst of a crown of mountains and eternal blossoms; nor in the southern glory of colour; nor in its burning sunrises or sunsets, nor its charming population; nor even in its exquisite climate, that knows neither summer glow nor winter frost: it was the legendary beginning, the unique upspringing and blossoming forth, that so powerfully attracted every European who possessed the slightest imagination.

I alighted at the beautiful Palace Hotel, at that time the richest and most comfortable one in

California, but now also destroyed in the earthquake of April 18, 1906.

Californian belles made it a condition then, when wedding their "boys," that they were to live for a time in the Palace Hotel.

Well, in spite of all the luxury and the splendid menus, I did not find it such a paradise.

The service was bad, and just those menus insupportable to the spoilt palate of a European.

The cuisine in America is awful! I shudder when I think of it.

Professor Semper held his two or three interesting lectures. I appeared with great success in Paul Lindau's *Maria and Magdalene*. Until this came off, I stayed in the hotel.

When Semper was about to depart, I told him how unsympathetic this building was to me. He advised me to look at lodgings in a German family—the Fischers. The father was the custodian of the Academy of Science, and they would be delighted to have me with them. We drove there at once, and I immediately took the rooms—one nice large bedroom, and a small, original-looking salon. The latter looked very much like a natural history cabinet, so many curios were kept there; and next it was a charming little greenhouse with living birds and rare plants.

To me—such a friend of nature—it seemed a paradise. The Fischers themselves were dear, kind people—he was a passionate zoologist, who passed half the year journeying in distant, unknown districts in order to collect all manner of plants and animals for the academy, for himself, and for export to Hamburg. Now he was here for the winter, and was delighted to find me so appreciative of all his curiosities.

When I looked at the large comfortable bedroom, he asked me if it would disturb me if on the chest of drawers two enormous glass cases covered with wiring remained, as they were fixed with heavy stones.

Snakes were in them, sleeping their winter sleep—a boa constrictor and a Mexican snake. Now they were hibernating for six months, and nothing could rouse them.

"Let them stay there, I don't mind," was my answer.

The same day I entered my fairy castle.

I made several delightful expeditions with Semper to look for shells and animals, especially salamanders. We drove southwards along the lovely coast, and revelled in the heavenly beauty and delight of it all. The beach of the Californian coast is composed of fine sand, which the dampness has made as flat as a macadamised road, and the light buggies and little one-horse vehicles are drawn so swiftly by mustangs that they seem to fly and hardly leave any traces of the wheels. One can drive on the very verge of the sea, and so quickly that one hardly feels the motion at all. Sometimes, indeed often, one comes upon the treacherous quicksands, which melt like water under horses and carriages; these may be engulfed without hope of salvation.

Nothing of the kind happened to me, and it became a perfect passion with me to fly thus along the beach.

Then came the farewell with dear old Semper!

I made certain acquaintances through him—Baron von Behr, President of the Academy of Science, and a nice and very old physician, Dr. Ahlers.

The first was a Courlander by birth who had been here for years, and was a famous specialist in zoology; the latter was a Hanoverian, who soon loved and spoilt me like a little daughter. I remember the following original episode of Baron von Behr. We had all made an excursion to the so-called Mission "Dolores," the oldest settlement of San Francisco, which had remained unchanged, and around which the beautiful city was grouped. The Mission is in the hands of the Jesuits, and we found that the

Protestant baron of the Baltic provinces had become a firm follower of them. At that time I was of materialistic, perhaps atheistic, opinions, although I really occupied myself very little with these things, and avoided speaking of them.

In consequence of my visit to the old Mission, I expressed my astonishment a few weeks later to Baron Behr that he, a scientific man and a zoologist, could ever be such a faithful son of the Roman Catholic Church, and even of the Jesuits. To this he replied good-naturedly, "Yes! you see, one doesn't know anything for certain, but one thing is absolutely sure, and that is, *that we must die.* This is what I think! If afterwards all is really at an end —well! this little church piety won't have done me any harm. But if it be true about the eternal life and all the rest, well, then, it is better to be on the safe side, and be sure of all advantages."

We laughed heartily, and the Jesuitical point of view of the old Professor Baron von Behr was often a source of amusement to us.

The career of my old friend Dr. Ahlers had been more interesting. He had come over as one of the first pioneers, had gone through the whole of the mad period of gold-digging, had exchanged his first nugget for a diamond, as gold-dust or nuggets were stolen too easily. He had always worn this diamond as a talisman, and had it made into a pendant as a farewell gift to me, that I might wear it also as a lucky talisman. I treasure it to this day, even if its donor has long since been laid to rest.

My old colleague told us mad and wild stories of those days of gold-digging, where each man was his own avenger and judge; and *how* he told it!

For instance, when I stood with him in the fine, animated Market Street and praised the elegance one saw everywhere around, the old man nodded approvingly, saying, "Yes, yes! You may well admire it, for the whole space from here to the port

has been reclaimed with endless trouble from the sea." Or he said, "Imagine that everywhere, here where you now see palace after palace, hardly thirty years ago there were only miserable huts belonging to the wildest fellows, gold-diggers and washers, to whom I also belonged! The ground, which now offers no unevenness to your Paris shoes, was then all heaped up, and searched for gold—only gold—by the gold-seekers of all the world! There was nothing but the wildly romantic, beautiful country around; the wonderful climate, the Mission building of the Jesuits, *Buona Herba*; and in most of those dwelling here the one thought, besides the gold fever, was envy of the others who perhaps had been more fortunate in their digging than themselves, and of whom they took measure, wondering if, in the silence of the night, a revolver-shot could not transfer the other's prize to themselves."

When one heard all these things, one was seized with amazement and admiration at all the magnificence that the mind and industry of man had created here in so short a time.

When I raved about the beauty of the women of the Golden Gate (for intermingling of races, Anglo-Saxon and Spanish, Mexican and German, had created here a most perfect type of human being), my old friend smiled in sad, ironical memory, and said: "Yes, the San Franciscan is now able to revel in the most luxuriant beauty of women, but *then*—good Heavens! Hundreds of them had to make shift with *one*, who could not be reckoned as most beautiful. When a woman decided to live amongst us savages, she had to be—well, let us say 'unprejudiced'! For this, however, we treated her like a queen, and all the men, without exception, willingly became her slaves. All this was only changed when the great stream of emigrants came over here from the East, with wife and child, and few possessions. Each new caravan was greeted with delight. They even brought

young girls with them, so the clergymen belonging to the Mission soon had their hands full with marriages and christenings. Soon the most charming little villas and gardens sprang up in the newly-levelled ground; and sometimes in the midst of all this creative energy one felt as if one were a magician in a fairy tale."

My old doctor told me all this, and how he had come out here in the early 'forties as a poor adventurous German student, and in consequence of his luck in gold-digging had long since become a prosperous and respected physician. It was in the glamour of his description that the legendary magic of San Francisco's uprising was woven for me; no rebuilding of it, I said, could ever restore the lost glory.

The destruction of the wonderful city, with whose brilliancy and magnificence no other city in the world can be compared, was to me like the loss of a beloved being; for me an ideal world has departed with it.

The doctor told me another amusing story of those days. When the gold fever was abating, a tremendous swindle was thought out by inventive brains; some people returned from the so-called "Pebble Bay," in a state of great delight. They said they had found precious stones *en brut* there, especially sapphires and rubies, strewn about like shells amongst the pebbles. They showed their finds, and the result was that a fever broke out among the people far greater than that of the gold-washing. Everybody rushed there; societies were formed; stones were found—yes, a good many; but after two years, in spite of digging, washing, and seeking, every trace of them disappeared.

It turned out that the whole thing was a colossal fraud, though cleverly planned. A small company bought *brut* stones to the value of about 2,000,000 marks, strewed them carefully on the ground among the pebbles, and then encouraged a few innocent people who had discovered them to spread the news.

They soon regained their 2,000,000 marks, as the "claims" were sold very high, but the clever gold-diggers did not allow themselves to be taken in as much as they had calculated. The swindle was discovered too soon, and resulted, I fancy, in the hanging and lynching of some of the originators.

The new country became civilised with astonishing rapidity. Very soon the rough plots of ground were ornamented with fine streets and beautiful buildings. San Francisco blossomed into the most elegant and fascinating town in the States. Universities and churches, hotels and means of communication, all grew with the suddenness and splendour that is only possible in America, and especially in California.

In the founding of all this, old Ahlers played a very great part, and so rose to be one of the most prominent personages.

As I have already said, he took a fatherly interest in me, and it was principally due to him that I learnt to know the country and the people on the borders of the Pacific during my stay there.

I visited with him the splendid charitable institutions, the orphanages, almshouses, hospitals, and convalescent homes, which were scattered about in park-like surroundings on the hills around the Bay of San Francisco.

They are unique in their comfort and situation. One might almost consider it a happiness to be orphaned, aged, poor, or sick here!

Even to-day I remember with a kind of envy the so-called "poor" yonder in the earthly paradise called California.

Until now I had only known the dry season, but people were already raving to me what the heavenly "Bay" would be like when the rainy weather set in. This blessed country knows no winter, but during a few months the people hope for a plentiful rainfall, which transforms, as if with a magician's wand, the whole country into a sea of flowers. At other times,

their need of a damper atmosphere is only supplied by the cool sea winds, which rise twice a day, and cool the air considerably from four to six o'clock in the afternoon. There are four crops of strawberries and asparagus in San Francisco, a fairyland for connoisseurs!

Well, the longed-for moment of rain arrived. The huge drops of water fell from the quickly-gathering clouds. One day of rain, then three fine ones—this is the winter of those blessed plains!

During these particularly beautiful days we went on a favourite excursion, which I liked doing over and over again. The way lay through the wonderful Golden Gate Park to the Sea Lions' Rock, and for many hours we drove through tropical vegetation.

In the midst of the foaming surf of the Pacific's long and majestic waves, there stands a rock which belongs to the seals. The giant seals here have been protected by Government for many years, and gambol like young dogs. Amidst a droning and bellowing that drowns the noise of the surf beyond the rock, with the spray dashing against it, a magnificent hotel was built, on the verandah of which one could sit comfortably shielded, and watch the fine spectacle. All of this is now destroyed.

Farther out, the lighthouse watches over the Golden Gate; and on the right, mountains shut in the wonderful Bay from the open sea.

I could sit there for hours, and never tire of admiring this splendid natural picture, and the ever-changing gambols of the seals as they swam through the surging flood, like mermaids out of Andersen's fairy tales; or sometimes landed on the rocks, when they were transformed into clumsy monsters, using their fins to climb up the steep rocks in order to snooze in the sun; or again, when annoyed by it, to dash headlong into the flood with a bound which seemed to court death. It is a picture that holds one spellbound, and exists nowhere else in the world.

The most fashionable people of San Francisco assembled in the hotel during the afternoon and on beautiful moonlight nights. Here everything that the *monde* of the factitious society life could imagine in splendour and magnificence, vied with that which the natural world offered. It was a unique picture, this gleaming San Francisco, embracing the highest civilisation and the greatest glories of nature.

Yet, amidst all the light and brightness, there was one dark and uncanny corner—"Chinatown"—and when I read of the ghastly scenes that took place there during the earthquake with dagger and revolver, I had to remember what I had heard once remarked, as it may possess a possible interest for others. I am referring, of course, to "Chinatown."

As already stated, my attention had been drawn to the remarkable pigtail-wearers on my journey to California. My interest in the yellow emigrants was increased when at my old friend's, Dr. Ahler's, I learnt to know his servant, or, as he jokingly called him, his housekeeper.

He had served the doctor and the friend who lived with him for many years alone. Both European gentlemen had no other servants in the charming little villa, and were waited on in the most ideal way. The house was kept scrupulously clean, and "Jimmy," as all Chinamen are nicknamed over there, did the cooking, washing, cleaning, and waited in a most perfect way!

And *how* the house was looked after! How he cooked, washed, cleaned, and waited! After some time he cooked for me also, as I did not like the food anywhere else. He prepared splendid little dinners, at which rice in every conceivable form played a part. When I once asked for a real Chinese meal, then indeed awful things appeared, but my old friend had reserve supplies, so that we were not obliged to curb our hunger with fish prepared in syrup, and sweet sugared chickens, or salted oranges.

During one of these dinners, and his silent attendance, I questioned this very intelligent "Jim" on many things, and was informed that he was here in America in order to save six hundred dollars; then he was returning to China. For one hundred dollars he could buy himself a better wife (cheaper ones were not much good, he said); for five hundred dollars he could buy and stock a nice little business, and then he would be a made man. Just now he spent his nights learning the second class of writing; there are four of these classes. Every Chinaman learnt the first, the higher classes only learnt the third, and the fourth is only permitted to be used by mandarins and the royal family. The second was sufficient to earn a certain consideration for those who knew it. Jimmy enlightened me freely on many subjects. It was only when I touched on religion that he remained silent. Silence is the greatest weapon of the Chinese in America. If in a court of justice witnesses are called up against a member of the celestial kingdom, the only answer one can obtain is, "No understandee," or a dead silence, and the putting on of an idiotic expression. This behaviour is the despair of the American courts of justice, as when no other than Chinese witnesses are called a crime can hardly ever be proved. Our Jimmy did the same thing whenever we questioned him about his religious convictions and customs, especially when I dared to mention the holy name of Confucius, or, as he pronounced it, "Con-fu-zee-ee."

He repeated the word in his own fashion, and his expression then grew more and more reserved and stony; his eyes glazed, and he was silent, as only an Asiatic knows how to be silent.

Of course this strange behaviour only roused my interest to the highest pitch.

I had already visited the Chinese theatre with Semper and other friends who, like most people settled in San Francisco, were the happy possessors

of a Chinese servant. I had, however, been most unpleasantly struck by the infernal noise made by the instruments used there. I had never been able to stand it for long, in spite of the magnificent costumes. One could never understand anything, because a Chinese tragedy always plays on through many years, therefore one can hardly gather anything from their action. The actors, according to our notions, strike us as rough, grimacing, and unnatural, on account of their grotesquely painted faces; also their scenery and other adjuncts are too naive; a table with chairs piled upon it represents a mountain, and if the actors climb over it, they mean to represent the traversing of a mountain pass. Wild shrieks and clashing of swords mean a battle, etc. The play lasts uninterruptedly for twenty-four hours!

I now come to an extraordinary peculiarity of the children of the sun. They did not seem to require any sleep. One sees them during every hour of the day or night—the big merchants sitting in their heavy silken garments before their reckoning machines and writing down profits here and there, as also the smallest business people, laundrymen and so forth, always busily ironing in their white linen garments. All these eccentricities interested me very much, and I resolved to study most minutely the Chinese town in the heart of San Francisco. My old friend Ahlers thought that this would only be possible at night, and this wasn't the thing for him at his age. I could only hope to understand everything thoroughly if I took a detective with me, who was well acquainted with Chinatown, and under his protection descended with him into the midst of their activities. For this purpose we would take tea beforehand in some better-class tea-house. At twelve o'clock the detective was to take me in charge, and I was to enter, disguised, the portals of hell. In this first-class tea-house sat charming Americans with their lady friends in superb evening toilettes, next to rich Chinamen in costly

brocade garments, either alone or in couples. They do not bring their wives to foreign countries, and look contemptuously at the Westerns who thus openly expose their wives and daughters to the public gaze. The only Chinese women in San Francisco are those in brothels; these are prostitutes of the lowest order, and semi-imprisoned there. But of these later.

The only exception was a rich merchant who had his wife and sister with him. These two ladies, in spite of their strict Chinese garments and coiffure, led an absolutely Western life, to the horror of their compatriots. They kept governesses for the English language, music, declamation and French. I learnt more of their manners and customs from one of their governesses, to whom I shall refer by and by. The dignified and quiet demeanour of the Orientals, who seem to have relegated all noise to their theatres, contrasted pleasantly in the restaurant with the loud tones and laughter of the Europeans.

After a meal, consisting of an original sort of dish prepared with fish and rice (sometimes not ill-tasting), I gave myself into the hands of the detective with whom I had made friends the previous day. We began our wanderings with the inspection of the lodging-houses.

If my guide had not been recommended to me by Dr. Ahlers himself, and been stated by him to be perfectly trustworthy, I think I should already have given up the expedition, as this beginning of things was so uncanny and unappetising.

We went up and down pitch-dark staircases illuminated only by the lantern of my companion, who recommended me from the first to pick my skirts up high and hold them close together.

Everything here was sticky, untidy, and slimy. One slipped about on a gelatinous floor, to land finally after endless ups and downs into a wide dark courtyard. Here small coal-fires were burning beneath kettles, around which cowered a strange

company of Chinese, young and old, their legs crossed under them in true Oriental fashion. They looked at us indifferently; we appeared to them in their own dwellings despicable beings—not human; followers neither of Confucius nor of Buddha. They scarcely spoke among themselves, and, from what I could see, threw all kinds of filth, looking like frogs and snakes, into their kettles, or pulled remarkable titbits out of them, then placed them in little vessels, and devoured them cleverly with their little ivory chop-sticks. The only drink was tea, which each one prepared in his small cup without a handle. The whole made a disgusting impression on me, and when the detective proposed to visit the big house to see the people's sleeping apartments, I refused decisively. The offensive smell, this uncovered courtyard, and the slippery stairs had satisfied my curiosity.

From here we turned to the opium dens, to those where the better classes gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the drug, and also to those of the lower classes. A nice young Chinaman led us to the houses of the former, and seemed to treat my companion with respectful awe, for although the latter did not wear exactly a policeman's uniform, the shield on his breast, and the club hanging by his side, also the revolver which was distinctly visible beneath his coat, testified to his power. He was a well-known visitor to all these dens of vice, and one whom they half feared, and yet were half pleased to see, as he understood how to take them.

In this better-class opium den the couches were covered with clean linen, and in many respects similar to the poorer ones, which latter I shall presently describe.

These couches were shallow, with only a thin pillow for the head, and separated from each other by Chinese screens. In each room there were two or three couches, not placed one over the other; nor were the opium smokers served by one man alone as

in the poorer quarters. I could only see the arrangements here, not the smokers. The rooms were dimly lighted by paper lanterns.

Our next visit was more interesting, as it was to the real opium dens. The detective knocked in a peculiar manner at the door of a miserable house, and a horrible-looking old Chinaman put out his head, and whispered softly to my companion.

At a hint from my guide, I gave the old man a dollar, whereupon he opened the door and let us through an unspeakably filthy passage to the den of opium smokers.

At first I fell back, as the smell that greeted me took away my breath—the opium fumes, the unwashed men of the yellow race, who, like all human races, have their especial and to others often repulsive smell—in short, a vapour which aroused one's disgust in the highest degree. This was intensified by a low-burning oil-lamp, and the smoke of the glimmering coals which were always in readiness for the opium pipes.

Imagine three or four beings lying one above the other on narrow planks—like railway beds with hard mattresses—each long and wide enough to accommodate one man; the rooms in which planks are arranged are about twenty feet long.

Here the smokers lay in all degrees of opium intoxication, above and behind each other. Those who were still awake looked at us with half-cunning glances, and two of them began to converse with me at once.

"Had I ever smoked opium?"

"No, never!"

"Well, you ought to try a pull." He handed me a pipe which had just been filled.

My detective explained to me that this was a great civility, and I must not refuse. The old Chinese serving-man took the little pipe, put a new mouthpiece on it, and blew up the coals. The thing looks like a reed penholder, upon which one has put a small

inkstand. This contains about a thimbleful of opium rosin, that is vaporised by the glowing coals and emptied by a few whiffs.

I was afraid of the sickness which always accompanies the first smoke, took the little pipe, pretended it was impossible for me to learn how to use it—I preferred giving the pleasant host a dollar in thanks —and looked at the rest of those who were present. They lay in every imaginable pose, with glassy staring eyes, their hands hanging down ; from these the old Chinaman took the little pipes, which were no longer needed, murmuring softly. They were all sallow, with a death-like flabby skin, and dirty linen blouses, and with black teeth showing in their open mouths. It was a disgusting sight.

As I was walking through the rows, and passed my first hospitable acquaintance, he lay already reeling ecstatically. However, he still knew me, and assured me there was no higher felicity than that in which he now was.

The detective told me that most of them who pursued their vice here only indulged in it a few hours during the night; others again only worked sufficiently to gain the few cents necessary to still the craving of their opium hunger, and passed nearly the whole of the twenty-four hours in the pestilential hole. They soon perished, and only then were able to rejoice their fatherland by presenting it with their pigtails.

For if a Chinaman dies in a foreign country, and does not possess the means to have his body transported to China, the pigtail must go back ; otherwise his soul is lost. Every year many coffins, encased in bright boxes and full of pigtails, were returned to the sacred Empire of the sun.

From this den of vice we proceeded to the next— to the wretched Chinese women who here served as *filles de joie* to the lowest of their countrymen and to oriental sailors.

We halted before miserable wooden huts, and my guide had also for these doors a peculiar, very characteristic knock. The door was held ajar, and a hideous old Chinawoman peeped through the chink. As soon as she recognised the detective, she opened the door wide enough to admit of our slipping in. Darkness enfolded us, and only in the distance a few paper lanterns showed us the way to the "inner apartments."

The creatures that lay here on planks which were arranged similarly to those in the opium dens, and who were waiting for business, were no women—they were animals, poor, ugly, wretched animals, looking as such, treated as such, behaving as such.

I had asked the detective to remain outside, as it was painful to me to look at all this in the presence of a man; and as the prostitutes neither spoke nor understood English, a terrible old woman had to act as interpreter.

The girls were, according to my idea, repulsively ugly; their hair was carefully dressed in the Chinese fashion, and they were clad in a short coloured cotton gown like a shirt; but like all Chinese men and women, they had very delicate little hands and feet. But their bodies!

The old woman presented them to me as one does animals at the cattle-market, and not for a moment did I imagine I had human beings before me—at the best they seemed like apes, for they looked like them! Their bodies, clean shaven of all hair, had all the characteristics of the ape. Withal they looked worn and badly nourished. In a word, it was a pitiful sight. When, at the end of the show, I laid a few dollars on the table, they all thanked me, including the old one, as if I had bestowed a royal gift on them.

I must remark that the police take rather rigid measures to enforce the scum of the Chinese population to make use only of these Chinese brothels,

because on the American side they fear that the Chinamen, by sexual connection with Americans, might spread among them their horrible diseases such as leprosy, syphilis, and elephantiasis.

I know that this night I returned in the deepest disgust from my visit to Chinatown, and I had only gone there to study the depths of human vice and destitution. I did not wonder so much later on, reading all the horrible deeds said to have been committed by the Chinese during the earthquake, for even the lower classes of San Francisco behaved in those days of terror like wild beasts—they could not belie their ancestors, they remained "wild fellows" in spite of the forty or fifty years of civilisation they had gone through. I could more easily understand murders and thefts from corpses which the Chinese committed during the time of the holocaust.

It was otherwise in the dainty, clean houses of the rich Chinese and big merchants. I visited some of their warehouses, and here I was received with all token of honour and esteem. I admired the gigantic bales of tea as much as the costly stuffs and embroideries.

I was studying then for the English stage, which I wished to join, and took lessons in the special pronunciation needed for this with an American.

This extremely nice woman also taught English to the above-mentioned two Chinese girls; and when she heard how interested I was in everything Chinese, she spoke of me to the two ladies, and they asked me to accompany her there on a visit.

I accepted the invitation with pleasure. I found two real specimens of Chinese ladies, with little crippled feet which permitted them only a painful and swaying gait. They were dressed in beautiful silken garments, had ugly yellow faces, but very amiable, educated, and civilised manners.

The parlour in which they received me was arranged more in American than Chinese fashion, yet

the matting on which they squatted was not wanting; there were also low inlaid tables, lovely embroideries, and nicknacks of all kinds.

We conversed together quite pleasantly for an hour, and their servant offered me tea and sweets, both of which were exceptionally good. The preparation of the tea was here, as also in the tea-houses, totally different from that which we are used to, even in Russia—the tea-drinking country *par excellence.*

The Chinese use no teapot; a pinch of tea is put into the bowls without handles, boiling water poured upon it, another bowl placed quickly over it, and the very light and aromatic tea is then poured out through the chink of the two bowls into a third one, ready for the purpose, and taken without any addition of sugar, cream, or lemon—pure essence of tea.

My studies here offered me a picture of the far East in the extreme West—interesting from many points of view, but on the whole rather revolting to European ideas, especially at that time, where one had not yet reached the "modern" pitch of beholding the pink of perfection in Eastern art, but was rather inclined to regard its painting, and other creations of its artists, more like curiosities. These one looked at perhaps with a certain interest, but as an outsider, as was the case with me, in the house of these rich Chinese. Certainly I looked with interest, but with no special sympathy, at their peculiarities—at themselves and their costly clothing, their thousand valuable nicknacks, embroideries, and wood-carvings.

The night in Chinatown filled me with such horror even on the following morning, that I joyfully agreed when my old friend, Dr. Ahlers, proposed spending the day in the bright, blossoming villa settlement of Oakland. We crossed the magnificent arm of the sea, and even now, on looking back to that day, my heart is filled with light and joy. It was in truth a settlement of villas nestling in blossoms. Yes, one's rejoicing soul could discover there everything that

meant blooms and flowers in this world. Here were palms and tea-bushes, flourishing side by side with every fruit-tree as yet known to us. The tiniest garden represented a miniature Eden illuminated by the sun in the dark blue sky, the silver sea sparkled, and the soft gentle winds blew over all this tropical and northern flora, wafting to us with every breath a perfume of flowers and intoxicating scents.

How glad I am that the catastrophe spared this marvellous corner of the earth, lovely Oakland, and that this truly hospitable land of the gods could offer a peaceful and protecting refuge to poor and trembling fugitives when this wonderful city was reduced in a few hours to dust and ashes. At that time, where in Oakland only dainty villas rested in their peaceful gardens, it conjured up the illusion that this restless world still held peace and true happiness.

Directly after the earthquake, new business houses sprang up and banks built their branches here. In the reports it was said that "Oakland is blossoming out!"

My heart is almost as heavy at the idea of this as it is at the destruction of old "'Frisco." Once more I repeat: Would that I could show others this wonderful creation of man, as it then existed on the shores of the Pacific Ocean—just as it was permitted to me to behold it at that time! Everywhere then, in spite of the elegance of the buildings, one saw the naive want of taste of its founders, and despite the millions expended on them, palatial buildings were placed side by side with some construction evolved from the untrained fantasy of its builder. I cannot do it, for words can paint but insufficiently that which the enchanted eye quickly communicated to the receptive mind.

CHAPTER XXXVII

In describing all these delights of California, I have quite forgotten to talk of the reason which actually took me there. Let me now say at least a few words about it. The manager of the German theatre there was the clever Ottilie Genée—sister of Rudolph Genée. She had understood how to combine a splendid ensemble, composed of Germans who had settled there, and all kinds of first-class touring artists, whom she always engaged for several months, as it would otherwise not have been worth while, considering the expensive journey.

She herself, a very good actress, schooled her troupe dexterously, and gave farces, comedy, drama, and also great tragedies in quite good style. Thus the little German art institute contributed greatly to keep the German spirit in the far West in touch with the literature of the old country, and to offer compatriots a place where they could regard each other as brethren with a common native tongue and customs.

Their theatre now also lies in ruins.

With a heavy heart I at last left the Golden Gate which had become so dear to me.

Taking a final farewell of the splendours I had beheld, I drove away from eternal spring to the cold bleak winter of Minnesota.

My longing, however, remained eternally with the wonderful Bay, and I always hoped one day to be able to make my beloved San Francisco my final home.

. . . . .

At that time, in consequence of my stage triumphs, I had been advised by English actors and directors to quit the German-American stage, and to devote myself completely to the art of the English-American one, as the celebrated Fanny Yanuschek and a Pole—Madame Modjeska—had done before me.

As neither of these actresses spoke perfect English, but were nevertheless covered with gold and laurels by the Americans, and as I, with little study, could easily acquire more perfect English than theirs, I resolved to follow this well-meant advice.

I was tired of playing in the West to a public consisting of shoemakers, brewers and bakers, who composed its chief elements, with the few exceptions of the more educated ones who had drifted hither and formed in St. Louis a little circle of refugees in 1848.

They were not the people before whom to play drawing-room rôles and delicate French comedies; they liked to see me play in my beautiful Parisian gowns, but I never got in touch with them, as they had no understanding for the finer nuances with which one was able to achieve the greatest effect in Berlin and Vienna.

I evoked more applause with a little shrieking and weeping than with the cleverest finesse in conversation, which was my strong point.

We made a little joke that all these people were more at home in a *saloon* than in a *salon*.

On the English-American stage it is otherwise. Even there they have no very appreciative public for fine comedy, but in every town of the States there is a certain circle of educated people, large enough to fill the theatres once or twice a week.

The only permanent theatre existing at that time in the States was in New York City, where the "star" system is driven to its extreme, but where there is much money to be made.

In these "star" companies there is, as a general

rule, only one actor and actress of any note, the others are below mediocrity. But among the American "stars" I have found some truly phenomenal ones. I consider Mrs. Clara Morris as one of the most genial actresses I have ever seen on any stage or in any country. She did not possess much art, but her passion was altogether elementary. She had a power of speech and gesture that carried one away, although this little woman was at death's door with spinal disease and consumption.

She had neither beauty nor elegance—only a pair of wonderfully eloquent, big grey eyes, with which to conquer the hearts of the people.

Her genius simply overwhelmed one. I have never before or since seen anything like it, and yet often in the midst of a scene she was obliged to stop on account of pain; a famous medicine was given her, and then she was able to continue.

How one applauded her, and what power she had of moving her public!

I will relate here—even if I anticipate a little—why I gave up my idea of entering into competition with these great English actresses.

I had already received offers from several first-class managers in case I had a repertoire ready in the English language. I picked out Max Strakosch, who was then the best impresario, and whom I knew and found very sympathetic. We had already arranged for several tours, and I was ready with a number of rôles. About a year later we sat in Herr Strakosch's office in New York to sign the contract—he, myself, and my husband, Serge von Schewitsch—when the latter said with his usual quiet manner, "That is all very well, but I demand that my wife returns to me every six weeks for a fortnight—otherwise I will not give my consent to the contract." Tableau! Then Strakosch put down his pen and said, "That ends the matter, for this is as impossible as flying. We might be somewhere in the West, and you

would expect me to bring back your wife to her spouse's loving arms and sacrifice so many thousand dollars to your heart! No, dear sir!" And turning to me, "And what does the person most concerned in the matter say?"

I laughed and said, "Very well, then, I will wait a little while. After all I did not come to America to make dollars and star tours; but it is right to stay with him—therefore we will remain together, and give up the other thing."

We then wandered home happily, the poorer as regards the dollar harvest, but the happier at heart.

So ended my English stage dream!

I must mention a little adventure which took place in San Francisco.

I am, as I often said, a great lover of dogs, and have a great preference amongst the dear four-footed creatures for the breed of Skye terrier, a little dog that comes from the Isle of Skye, to the north of Scotland, with an elongated body. In this it resembles the dachshund, as in its whole build, its crooked broad feet, and long head; only the ears stand upright, and the entire body is covered with beautiful long, silky hair, which touches the ground, and often hides the eyes and nose. The Skyes are strikingly intelligent and faithful.

My friend Ahlers told me of the possibility of getting a blue one, that is, a kind of grey-blue, and we drove to the slaughter-house, as a German butcher was said to be the happy possessor of it!

The dog was charming and quite young, and I bought it for the awful price of 75 dollars. The master-butcher said he was delighted to make my acquaintance, after having seen me on the stage, and wishing to please me said, "Had I ever seen an ox slaughtered?"

"No, I had not!"

To the amusement of my friend, the gallant butcher forced me to accompany him to his slaughter-

house. I must say I was astonished at its large scale and cleanliness, also at the absolute absence of cruelty of the whole proceeding. The floor and walls were so clean that one could have taken one's meals there. The animal (for only the one condemned to be slaughtered was visible) was led forward with bandaged eyes; one mighty blow of a hammer, and it fell on the ground. I sprang up, and did not want to look at anything else. The butcher then told me the ox was completely senseless, but I refused any more of this form of civility, which the doctor declared had not yet fallen to the lot of any stage star.

A short time after that my little dog preserved me from great danger.

We two, he and I, were sleeping quietly one night, when I was awakened by the low growling of "Hexi" (the little dog). I tried to pacify it, but found its whole body trembling. I thought of burglars, and struck a light, but saw nothing, and the little animal continued barking angrily at the chest of drawers. What can describe my horror when I saw a movement of the lid of the case containing the boa constrictor! I seized my Hexi and rushed out of the bed and room, shutting the door at the very moment that the heavy stone rolled on to the ground. I ran upstairs in tearing haste, and knocked at Herr Fischer's bedroom door. "The snake, the snake! Quick, quick!" I called. He answered leisurely, "Ah, what is it?"

"It is awake and coming out."

"Impossible! It is asleep and cannot awaken yet."

"Well, you will see! Make haste!"

He now drew his enormous boots on, and seizing the big leather sack used for catching snakes rushed downstairs, and arrived at the right moment to catch the monster in the sack just when it was letting itself down from the chest of drawers to the ground.

Terrible excitement prevailed. The wife and son came as well, and the explanation of the snake's irregular behaviour was, that I had had a fire lit on that cold and rainy afternoon. The warmth of the fire had aroused the monster from his winter torpor, and the lid and stone proved too weak to prevent its exit. Had it not been for my little dog, it is probable that I should have been favoured and perhaps annihilated by its first embrace.

And now farewell, heavenly Bay of the Golden Gate! The way now lies eastward to the cold, grim winter of Minnesota, where a long touring engagement calls me, which is to end at Milwaukee. But I was going as well towards the reunion with my heart's beloved, Serge.

. . . . .

He in the meantime had experienced good and bad times in New York. The terrible news had reached him that the Tsar (at that time Alexander II.) had sequestrated his possessions and fortune, and that he could not expect another rouble from home.

That was a hard blow. It happened because he had left the service of the State without a permit, and the country without a passport. I must at once add that after some years his eldest brother, who was Governor of Livland, succeeded in getting the sequester transferred to a guardianship; and as the brother himself was named guardian, matters were alleviated later on, thanks to this excellent man. We had a hard life during these first years. It was a continual struggle for existence, for we could only rely on what we earned for ourselves.

Serge had been obliged to live most economically for some time. The Russo-Turkish war was over, and with it the regular income he derived from the English papers; and he was not yet sufficiently schooled in journalism to be able to feel at home in all departments, after only nine months' stay in America. Added to this, he was deeply depressed

at finding himself alone after all the great sacrifices he had made, without friends, without family, far from home—and without the woman for whose sake he had left everything.

I read his state of mind from his letters, and resolved, therefore, to end this parting, which was useless. We agreed to meet on the way, and, delighted with the prospect, I went to Chicago.

On the journey the beautiful Salt Lake presented its exquisite picture to me once more; it was a cold, clear, winter morning, and the lake lay in deepest blue, surrounded by snow-tipped mountains, which were tinted by the rosy glow of the rising sun. It reminded me of the Lake of Geneva in clear winter weather. It was on this journey that I witnessed an appalling disaster, which I have spoken of more fully in my Theosophical work, *Wie ich mein Selbst fand*, which appeared under a pseudonym, "Von einer Occultistin."

A young girl in our train threw herself out of the window of the ladies' lavatory, and was brought back to the sleeping-car in a terrible condition.

A doctor was travelling with her, as she was supposed to be unhinged in her mind. She had already tried to commit suicide, so the doctor told me, because the man she loved was dead. Her parents were sending her to relations in Chicago in order to turn her thoughts to other things.

I helped the doctor to bandage and put the unfortunate girl to bed, although he shook his head despairingly and said there was nothing to be done. The poor creature only regained consciousness after some hours. Her first glance fell on me, and perhaps that was why she took such a fancy to me. She would only take nourishment from me, and I alone was allowed to arrange her pillows and rugs comfortably for her.

We took her to Chicago in a dying state. She was suffering fearful agony, and was covered with one

of my cloaks. Her beautiful large blue eyes rested on me gratefully. She declared that since she first looked on me she had felt bathed in light and love.

This sad experience was effaced by the happy meeting, after so many weeks of parting, with Serge, who appeared suddenly in my drawing-room car a few stations earlier than I had expected.

He surprised me with the news that he could remain with me quietly for a long time, as a secure future lay before him.

It had been decided in New York to found the *Volkszeitung*, which even now has such a success. Serge was consulted about it, and his eminent journalistic talent was quickly perceived.

The first number was to appear in three months; and he had been chosen as editor of the Sunday paper, a speciality much favoured by all newspaper proprietors, and devoted to literary and artistic purposes.

During the week the American has just sufficient time to read his personal telegrams, but on Sunday —the dullest day in all Anglo-Saxon countries—he wants to be amused all day if possible by his newspaper, hence the immense Sunday editions, which resemble a book.

The salaries of the new undertaking were not, and are not, exactly brilliant, according to American ideas, as the *Volkszeitung* was founded by voluntary contributions from the New York union of German workmen, but it seemed sufficient; and above all, at first it was a sure foundation. So we were pleased in every way, and calm and happy. There is nothing very important to relate of the stay in Milwaukee. I played with tremendous success before crowded houses, and I had something very unusual in German theatres in America, that is, excellent partners in the acting. These were, Director Franz Kirschner (formerly of the Hofburg Theatre Royal in Vienna, who later on was a favourite for many years at the

Deutsches Theater in Berlin), and Emil von der Osten, who acted in Dresden as leading lover, and who was one of the handsomest men I remember, and an amiable and talented artist.

Our acting together was so appreciated that at the end of the season at Milwaukee we resolved definitely to engage several colleagues, and tour together as a company in the big cities of the U.S.A.

We were right in this, and were rewarded by the best of results.

This experience, despite its success, only strengthened my conviction that, for *my* temperament, the German-American stage was not the right field. The decision ripened in me more and more to go over to the English stage.

I appeared triumphantly in Milwaukee when playing the part of the Marquise Pompadour in *Narcisse*, and in my mind's eye I saw myself victorious, and blessed with riches through this English career.

I have already narrated how this dream ended. At that time it was still living, attracting me, and elevating me.

We all went to Chicago and St. Louis in the spring. Owing to the Exhibition, Chicago has been so often described of late that I can refrain from repetition. It made on us, as we did not see it in its exhibition array, quite a horrible impression. It is the type of everything that grates on the nerves of the refined European, and is truly American in the chase for dollars, in the ugliness of its buildings, the dirt and noise of the streets; everything in this rush and din is unæsthetic. I was glad when we got away from the chaos of this centre of industry, and arrived at the distant, peaceful St. Louis, situated, with its charming parks, on the Mississippi.

Immediately on my arrival in the hotel a porter informed me that a gentleman had often called inquiring for me, and the day on which I might be

looked for. The same was repeated to me by the original theatre manageress: "A gentleman had several times asked at the box-office if I had not yet arrived!"

I racked my brain as to whom this person might be, for I did not know a single soul in all these cities in the interior of the continent. Of course I was accustomed to reporters, who often in the middle of a train journey (especially when I was travelling from San Francisco) got in—took out their instruments of torture, namely, pencil and paper, and in the manner of an inquisition, put together their interview.

"But," said the manageress, "he did not look like an interviewer."

I referred to her before as being "original," and I can only pity all who never saw her. She was a most worthy woman, and a good actress according to German-American Western ideas, and her husband was just as remarkable. Both of them were like figures out of Holtei's *Vagabonds* come to life.

The Directress was a huge woman, dressed always in flashy colours or bold tartans. She wore enormous hats enthroned on a mighty coiffure.

The tiny little Herr Director, with his head of long curly hair, generally wore a Spanish mantle thrown over his shoulder or hanging down. Both of them had a majestic theatrical gait, but, as already mentioned, they were good-natured people, according to Western convictions, and not unskilful managers.

I was hardly established in the hotel when the waiter announced the gentleman who had so often inquired for me.

On the threshold stood a tall man, with snow-white hair and beard, and large blue eyes. He made a very imposing impression.

The large blue eyes filled with tears as he looked at me, and he said in a voice slightly quivering with emotion, "So this is my little Helene!"

I must confess I was in deep embarrassment on

seeing this old and extremely sympathetic gentleman before me thus,—as I had not the faintest idea who he could be, where he might have come from, and whence his emotion.

"My name is Dr. Nagel," he said. "Of course this name will not convey much to you."

I shook my head uncomprehendingly—asked him to be seated.

Now he related that he had been the most intimate student friend of my father, and was as a brother to my mother; and that he, as assistant of our old family doctor, had brought me into the world; that later on I was his especial darling until I was three years of age, and had always called him uncle *Pinne*—a student nickname derived from Nagel (nail).

It now flashed through my memory. Onkel Pinne. "Oh yes, I know it quite well," I exclaimed, "although I ought to bear malice to you for bringing me into the world." Yet I was delighted with all my heart at finding Onkel Pinne again! "A thousand thanks for having looked me up in such a way!"

Serge also greeted him just as heartily, and an hour later his whole family, which henceforth I considered as my own, had gathered round us, his dear old wife, who also had known me as a baby; her only son, and his charming, witty, American wife. From that moment I was no longer alone in America. They considered themselves as belonging to me during my whole stay here. I should hardly have mentioned this little episode, if Dr. Nagel's life in America had not been such an interesting one. Now when we found the dear old thing again, he was a highly esteemed doctor and a rich man, who had been living for years in St. Louis in his beautiful villa near the park.

But he and his wife had a wild pioneer existence behind them. As quite young people they had, when I was still a baby, emigrated to Texas with little money, but much courage. He had received a piece

of land there gratuitously from the Government; but it was in a wild, inhospitable district. He himself, with the help of a neighbour who had come there in identical circumstances, built a house, and cultivated a portion of the primeval forest for vegetables and potatoes. The two brave young Germans had lived there alone for ten years. There it was that their boy was born; there they taught him themselves, and brought him up to be a good man. Once every year the doctor rode into the neighbouring town. It was a ride of many days, and he brought back a sack of flour, a sack of sugar, and a little clothing material.

Everything else they made themselves. Yes, the doctor's wife even made the shoes of the family out of bast, linen, and leather!

Now one saw no trace of the rough pioneer life in these refined people, whose every thought was noble. Their house was the centre of all intellectual German life, and first-class music was especially cultivated by them. Their clever, dainty little daughter-in-law was a piano-player of the highest order.

Another interesting house in St. Louis was that of the editor of the *Westliche Post*, Dr. Pretorius, a veteran of "forty-eight." He collected in his beautiful house, which also was situated near the park, chiefly his old compatriots of that time, many of whom lived in Missouri city, and all that was artistic and intellectual there.

I was received by his clever and cultivated wife with open arms. I made the acquaintance here of Fritz Hecker, the volunteer once so wild. He was a tall, handsome old man, still full of life, and was one of the most eminent men I had ever known.

We drew very near to each other intellectually, and it was he who first advised me to take up literary work. At this time, however, I had no confidence in myself. Hecker was much respected and admired in America for taking part in the Civil War, where he led against the Northerners a regiment of his own; he had

commanded himself until he was severely wounded. Even in his then advanced old age one had to admire his eloquence.

I visited him at his model farm, and saw how the "world-stormer" had become a world philosopher, and led an enviable life without, however, withdrawing from his intellectual interests, which challenged collaboration in politics and literature.

In the hospitable home of Pretorius I again found Fanny Vanuschek, the famous tragedian; and from that time, in spite of her great age, a lasting bond of friendship sprung up between us.

She was probably the most genial actress of any country in the nineteenth century, not even excepting the aforementioned American Mrs. Clara Morris, who stood far below Fanny Vanuschek in the artistic world, and did not possess the German's charming voice, wherewith to render classical parts in a similar way to the great tragedian.

Fanny had never been beautiful, even in her youth — merely interesting; but her impelling presence, heightened by the power of her genius, impressed every one of the audience, as probably no personality of the stage has ever done before, not even excepting Ristori.

Let one take into consideration that, at the time I am speaking of, Vanuschek was well over fifty, and at the age of fifty-three went on the English stage, learning English only then. One always heard by her strong accent that she was a foreigner, but nevertheless she played rôles such as Medea, Maria Stuart, Brünnhilde (in a very poor translation). She carried her American spectators, just as she did us Germans, to the wildest pitch of enthusiasm. Posterity, to which I relate this, though it does not as a rule "weave laurels for the minstrel," can have no idea of the all-powerful genius of this wonderful woman.

Unfortunately her fiery heart and temperament

would not learn that "love" at a certain time of life is not aesthetic, and only leads to unwise actions. She married a man very much younger than herself, who ran through all her considerable savings. Even then she did not come to her senses, so that, "outliving herself," she was compelled to act in minor theatres to eke out her existence, and died in extreme poverty.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

During the first years of my American sojourn I went every winter and spring on successful tours to the theatres in the West I have already referred to. My interest in this flagged, and I devoted myself more and more to literary work, as Frederick Hecker had advised me to.

I wrote for all the German-American papers, and published *Meine Beziehungen zu Ferdinand Lassalle*, and my novel *Countess Vera* (which first appeared in the New York *Puck*, and which was brilliantly remunerated); also I became a constant contributor to the St. Louis *Westliche Post*, and theatrical critic for the New York *Volkszeitung*.

I do not know if I have already mentioned it, but our friends all tried to persuade Serge and myself to get married, which in America does not require much preparation. There, it is a ceremony that is almost as simple to-day as it was at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In every town and village then a certain stone was erected, before which those who resolved to get married appeared, and ceremoniously vowed faithfully to cleave together and protect each other for better for worse, and they were considered as firmly bound as nowadays by clerical or state bonds.

So we gave way to their sensible persuasions and went, as we were spending the summer in the country, to a judge there, who had the same power as any priest or clergyman to solemnise marriages.

There we were united for better for worse. The ceremony consisted merely of the questions addressed to us by the judge—who in our case was an old man hardly able to write. He asked whether we had not already been married elsewhere.

On hearing the negative answer, he read a legal paragraph, which asks whether the couple is agreed to cleave together for better for worse, and to promise fidelity and protection. They say "Yes," and are married. At this, they receive a scrap of paper on which are written their names, and those of the judge and two witnesses; these one can call in simply from the street, but in our case the witnesses were our intimate friends Dr. Lilienthal and his wife. The Doctor was the most respected man in New York.

This bald ceremony seemed to me very comical. Could anything, clerical or of the state, knit us more closely together than our great love? It had already led us through good and bad times, and it now stood even this great test.

When now in my old age I look back on that bright summer's day in the little village of New Jersey, this is the only pathetic thing in the whole of that unpoetical wedding ceremony. Later on this "wedding" led to various unpleasantnesses. Of all this later.

When another time I returned from a town in the West, my husband told me that during the months of my absence he had struck up a close friendship with a strange old compatriot of his, who would interest me very much, a certain Helena Petrowna Blavatsky.

I discovered in her the most remarkable being (for one hardly dare designate her with the simple name of *woman*). She gave me new life; and indeed I may say without exaggeration that she took possession of the age.

I have described minutely our first acquaintanceship, and the time of her first sojourn in New York in my book, *Wie ich mein Selbst fand.* Whoever,

therefore, is interested in this most remarkable of all personalities, often styled the "Northern Sphinx," will find details of her in the book just mentioned. A repetition of my experiences with her would take up too much space in this book, although by rights the very first place is due to her.

My connection with Ferdinand Lassalle was the first great event of my life; it transformed a young girl who, although of extraordinary individuality, was bound at the same time by the closest family ties, into a free, self-reliant being, one who was able to fight alone against the prejudices of the world. It threw her, so to speak, out of her own path, where birth and education had placed her, and bestowed on her a proud self-consciousness and absolute self-reliance.

Now this wonderful woman, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, although altering nothing in my character, by her teachings (this was steeled and rendered inflexible in the fight against conventionalities) influenced me in my views of life and ideas on living.

She brought new life and new interest into my existence by revealing to all who had the privilege of coming into contact with her the ancient wisdom and doctrines of India in its new form of Theosophy. I do not speak now solely of myself, but of all those who formed the circle around Madame Blavatsky.

She undertook, by her fiery descriptions, so full of temperament, to illustrate to us the pure ethics and doctrines of evolution; to awaken our souls to the highest development; to urge us toward the discovery of the Godhead within ourselves; to foster it, and thus to mature to the highest spiritual development.

She taught us that which all religious doctrines clothe merely in their exterior garment of Christianity, or all philosophies with the jargon of their learned teachers; that which all bare material sciences of unbelief had failed to teach.

It would take volumes if I were to write the doings, life, and doctrines of this wonderful woman. I refer again to my book mentioned previously, and will quote here only one passage from it:

> Regarding her personal appearance, the head, which rose from the dark flowing garments, was immensely characteristic, although far more ugly than beautiful. A true Russian type, with a wide forehead, a short thick nose, prominent cheek-bones, a small, clever, mobile mouth with little fine teeth, brown and very curly hair, at that time unstreaked with grey and almost like that of a negro's; a sallow complexion, but a pair of eyes the like of which I had never seen—pale-blue, grey as water, but with a glance deep and penetrating, and as compelling as if it beheld the inner heart of things. Sometimes they held an expression as though fixed on something afar, high and immeasurably above all earthly things. Large, long, beautiful eyes, which illuminated the curious face. She always wore long, dark, flowing garments, and had ideally beautiful hands.

All this describes the external appearance of Helena Petrowna; but this was such a secondary consideration with her, that I give this picture merely because, with our clumsy customs, we are only able to imagine a personality if we can conjure up its outward appearance.

It was easy enough to give this exterior picture; but how shall I attempt to describe the woman, to give an insight into her being, her power, her abilities and character?

She was a combination of the most heterogeneous qualities, and until her departure from this earthly sphere, in 1891, she was attacked in the most malicious manner by some people. By others she was elevated high above everything, and by all she was considered as a sort of Cagliostro or St. Germain. She conversed with equal facility in Russian, English, French, German, Italian, and certain dialects of Hindustani, yet she lacked all positive knowledge—even the most superficial European school-training.

In matters of social life she evinced a truly touching

naïveté and ignorance. She possessed an irresistible charm in conversation, that comprised chiefly an intense comprehension of everything noble and great; and her really overflowing enthusiasm, joined to the most original and often coarse humour, was a mode of expression which was the comical despair of prudish Anglo-Saxons.

Her contempt for, and rebellion against, all social conventions made her sometimes appear even coarser than was her wont, and she hated and fought conventional lying with real Don Quixote-like courage. But whoever approached her in poverty or rags, hungry and needing comfort, could be sure to find in her a warm heart and an open hand—more than with most well-mannered, cultured people.

She and Colonel H. S. Olcott, the most faithful of all her pupils, lived strictly in accordance with Buddhistic teachings, and were absolute vegetarians.

No drop of wine, beer, or fermented liquors ever passed their lips, and she had a most fanatical hatred of everything intoxicating.

Her hospitality was genuinely Oriental. She placed everything she possessed at the disposal of her friends. With her this was such matter of course that she never pressed any one.

Every one who was accepted by her as a friend was free to come and stay, dine, or come and go as they pleased. They did in fact exactly as they liked within the limit of her given possibilities.

A little episode touching on our intimacy must be cited here.

The President of the Theosophical Society in India, who held the post for many years, was at that period one of the most respected lawyers of New York. As, however, he devoted his entire interest to Theosophy and the Theosophical Society founded by Madame Blavatsky, he lived under the same roof with this wonderful woman.

One day we sat altogether conversing on trivial

and more serious topics, when the question arose as to what *man* was able or unable to do.

I maintained one could do anything one really *willed* doing.

"Well," said Madame Blavatsky, laughing, "you can't make yourself a tailor-made dress."

"Nor trousers for your husband," added Olcott, and looked triumphantly at both of us as if he had mentioned something quite impossible.

The last idea put me on my mettle. "Very well, I shall try."

"Ah," added Olcott, "he must be able to wear them!"

"Of course," I agreed, to the high amusement of the Blavatsky, who insisted also on the tailor-made costume.

The tasks amused me very much. Directly I reached home, a pair of Serge's best trousers, made by one of the first Petersburg tailors, was taken in hand and carefully unpicked. Meanwhile, I engrossed myself entirely in this art, and resolved to carry out certain little tricks in combination with it. For instance, to cut off and re-sew the buttonhole strip. I had no money to buy expensive stuff, but had a beautiful large English plaid shawl which in its sober grey colour was very suitable for an elegant pair of trousers.

The cutting-out went splendidly. I did not know at that time how to use the sewing-machine. I tacked the pieces I had unpicked exactly on those I had cut out, and undertook the troublesome task of stitching in the *same* holes exactly, in order to get the new trousers the same as the others. When, after many days, this gigantic trial of patience was ended, amid much teasing from Serge, the old material was cut away close to the seam, all the little threads were removed, and, as I said before, by using the old buttonhole borders the trousers were completed, and were a masterpiece! My pride was boundless! They

fitted beautifully, as well as if they had been turned out by a first-class tailor. Serge had never pleased me more, nor had he ever looked so smart. But—unfortunately there was a "but"—when he wanted to put his usual odds and ends into his pockets, there were none! Tableau! Sold! However, the pocketless work of art was endlessly admired, and Serge wore it with pleasure for four years. Olcott and Blavatsky were wide-minded enough to take no notice of such trifles, and said I was right—one could do anything one wished!

The tailor-made gown for myself was naturally child's play compared with Serge's trousers. It was of blue cloth, made from an unpicked Paris model, and reached the highest perfection. My dear Blavatsky and others declared I had never had a dress that fitted me so well.

Well! this little episode and the praise of my friends had very useful consequences for me. Since that time, and to this day, I have made everything I wear myself, from the most dainty underlinen to the most complicated visiting-gowns, have never utilised the services of a tailor or dressmaker since, and am considered an elegant and well-dressed woman.

I therefore owe to this remarkable friend, Helena Petrowna Blavatsky, not only my mental and theosophical development, but also this practical and most valuable initiation into the arrangement of my entire wardrobe.

A year which we passed together in intimate friendship made me conversant with the fundamental traits of the oldest doctrine preached in a new form; and from year to year it has become more and more the aim and object of my life.

Then the "Sphinx of the North" went, with a few of her followers (among whom was the New York lawyer Olcott), to India—where Olcott has settled as President of the Theosophical Society, and where he

has become almost entirely a Hindu in manners and customs.

I saw them both depart with a heavy heart. How gladly I would have joined them, and gone with these two wonderful people to the wonderland of India; but our circumstances then bound us to New York.

One of the most lasting impressions of my sojourn in America I owe to my old friend Charles Dawbarn, of whose rare qualities, inclining to occultism, I have spoken in my book, *Wie ich mein Selbst fand.* One day he asked me if I would like to meet his old comrade Mrs. Smith, who lived only a few doors from us. The very common name conveyed nothing to me, but I replied, "If this is your friend—certainly, for then she must be an unusual person."

"So she is, and as regards unusual kindness and charity there is no one like her in the world; but if we go, please don't be horrified at her surroundings. She only lives for them. You will find this old woman, who is nearly eighty years of age, in the midst of most remarkable beings. I will not say more, you will see the rest yourself."

Of course I was very curious, and we went round to Mrs. Smith.

The little negress, peculiar to all American houses of the middle class, opened the door. "Yes, Mrs. Smith was at home with all the little ones!"

At the same moment we heard weird guttural sounds, more like animals than human beings. We were shown into a very large parlour where the old woman was surrounded by fifteen or sixteen little creatures, who at first sight looked most startling. My friend Dawbarn had prepared me, therefore I concealed my uneasiness, and looked at the sympathetic old woman who, with a most kindly smile, stretched out her hand and welcomed me into the circle of her protégées, who were outcasts—poor outcast protégées! I looked at the crowd of little ones, whose ages varied from three to twelve, and

now discovered by the lifeless expression of their glassy eyes that the poor things were blind. Mrs. Smith saw that I sympathised, and added at once:

"Oh, blindness is not the worst calamity! They are all idiots, deaf and dumb, and some of them, as you see, cannot walk—only crawl."

I was quite moved, and asked shudderingly, "What do you do with them?" The old woman replied, "Well, I simply make human beings out of them." She told the apparently eldest child—a girl of eleven or twelve—to come to her (all of them were scrupulously clean), and then asked me, "Will you allow Lizzie to touch you?" I looked at the child a little uneasily, but nevertheless nodded.

Mrs. Smith took the child's hand, laid it on her mouth, and said slowly, "Tell me what the lady looks like," tapping at the same time like a typist on Lizzie's other hand. The latter seemed to understand. Her features—so blunted and animal—lit up. She blinked with her sightless eyes, and seemed to scent my presence, so to speak, like a dog. She came straight up to me in the familiar room, placed her hand on my face, felt all over it, then said in the deep, guttural tones with which deaf and dumb people generally ejaculate, "Fine, soft, big-eyed, good."

My horror had given way to lively interest. I was astonished, and could not find words to express my admiration for this dear old lady, who made out of the miserable semi-animals before me beings which had at least arrived at a degree of intelligence, and restored the use of those senses that nature had entirely closed to them.

Only think—not only blind, not only deaf and dumb—no, these wretched children were likewise idiots! The smallest of them gave distinct evidences of this, and by its absolutely animal gestures proved what a colossal work Mrs. Smith had already achieved in the most advanced one.

About five-and-twenty years later, the wonderful book was published treating of Helen Keller, who, according to my opinion, is the greatest human phenomenon. Her splendid teacher, Miss Sullivan, relates here what enormous, almost unimaginable, difficulties had to be surmounted in order to humanise little Helen Keller, who was blind, deaf, and dumb; but as she is one of the most intelligent beings on earth, one could almost conceive her to be endowed with a sixth sense—intuition. It is well known that in her twentieth year she became a doctor of philosophy at the Radcliffe University. The spirit world lived within her—she only had to be taught how to enter and move in it. Then she swam there lightly and happily, like the trout in a mountain stream, as if she were in her own element.

Mrs. Smith's unhappy pupils were, and remained, idiots. Nevertheless, this human angel transformed them by love and patience into beings capable at least of manual aid, fit to be taken in by kind families, of which there are more in America than in Europe. Here one finds a truly Christian spirit, a Christlike sympathy as well as real broad-minded charity, which does not content itself solely with doing good, does not cease to succour need and outward necessity, but renounces its own comfort in self-sacrificing patience by taking such poor, unhappy outcasts into their midst and tending them.

After Mrs. Smith's death, these poor creatures were all divided among charitable families in the manner described.

The remembrance of this noble old woman and her pupils remains one of my most touching and elevating memories.

As already related, several well-known doctors belonging to our intimate circle had come to America almost without means, and at the time we knew them were more or less wealthy people. Riches are the alpha and omega of American existence; and

as neither Serge nor I found long sedentary work suited us, both of us were advised by our doctor friends to study medicine, and then, as in the case of the very famous couple, Dr. Jacoby and his wife, to practise together and earn money.

I was enthusiastic at the thought of this plan. I had, as one may remember, even as a child, always taken a lively interest in natural sciences, and this had been refreshed by Professor Semper. I made my preparations, matriculated at the New York University for Women, and studied for four years with the greatest zeal. In the meantime I made little trips to other universities — for instance, the Homeopathic and the Electric—in order to become familiar with the different methods.

It was an enlightening and a busy time for me. After six months Serge gave up the whole thing, and devoted himself more and more to active political work.

At that time (I do not know if this has since changed), the teaching in the American universities resembled that of the European gymnasia more than that of our universities.

First and foremost, entrance to the same is only conditional on the very simplest Board School education. There is an entrance fee of about two hundred dollars, and quite a primitive examination to pass. One is accepted if one can read, write, reckon, and if one knows a little American history and geography. One can then attend all lectures, and can also take a place at once in the operating-rooms. During the first half-year one studies physics, chemistry, botany, materia medica, theoretical anatomy, and physiology.

The method would be an impossible one in our universities. In the first place, there is rather a strict control (in many colleges by calling out the names), to find out if one attends the lectures regularly, and only serious reasons are accepted as an

excuse. Secondly, in real American fashion, all practical studies are pursued immediately; chemistry, physics, and also anatomy—the latter demonstrated from the first upon corpses. Thirdly, in every lecture a certain proportion of printed matter is given as a task to learn by heart. Whoever, then, is called up to repeat it must know it. Of course a good memory for words plays a big part in this. Therefore no knowledge of Latin is necessary. The student has to learn the Latin names together with anything else that is new to him. How and whether he will pass the examination, is entirely his own affair; this is according to the real American principle that every one is the author of his own good fortune. If fundamental education be wanting, he must acquire it—how, nobody cares! Therefore in such colleges all classes are represented, from the peasant to the son of the President—nearly all with the same preparation of the big but excellent Board School.

I must add one other thing. In the American universities a great deal more work is done than in Germany. The respect every American has for money, and, in consequence, for time, impels him to employ every minute of the highly paid educational period (four years' study are obligatory) with the greatest zeal.

There is no student life as we understand it; and most of the students are abstainers. There are no unions or beer meetings; hardly any of the students know each other beyond the superficial acquaintance of the lecture-room. At most, one or two of the poorer ones join forces and live together, in which case they share the same bed. Total strangers, therefore, are often forced into this most intimate companionship—a thing which, according to our custom, is quite unheard of.

In all such "natural" things, the Americans, especially those from the country, have childishly

naive ideas, whereas in other matters they are over-prudish.

Fate again stopped my plans. Just before I was to go up for my examination as doctor, I became so ill that I was in bed for many months, and unable to study. My medical friends told me I must have the courage to give up the idea of becoming a doctor, as in the broken-down state of my health, which was then recognised, it was impossible for me to practise.

I renounced my pet idea—that of becoming a great lady doctor—with a heavy heart, for I had an exceptional position at the High School where I studied. I possessed the gift of rapid and sure diagnosis, and for many years had been called "doctor" by the professors. They were not accustomed to have any one before them with such a first-class education and general knowledge as "Dr. Schewitsch."

I must say that as regards the class of women who studied medicine with me, ninety per cent of them became mostly higher class midwives; the remainder, however, eminent doctors.

I recall, for instance, a fair, delicate little woman, who, on completion of her studies, was elected dissector at the University, and another who entered into competition with four young doctors, and was elected for the post of head house doctor at the big German Hospital. They won their position by absolute superiority.

There are, or there were then, in New York, several women whose names were equal to those of the first men doctors—particularly in the speciality of children, women, and nerve doctors. It had been my intention to take up lung and heart diseases.

In concluding this episode, I must mention that I should be untruthful if I were to say that the prejudice against women students is on the whole less in America than it is in Europe. As illustration of this let one example be given.

The big cliniques of the New York hospitals are perhaps the most unique in the world. Here, during the course of the year, one can see every illness that suffering humanity is forced to bear.

Through the active ship transport from all parts of the world, there are always some cases of the rarest maladies, even those of savages, side by side with the usual visitations of civilised people. For the student, the material here was both uncommon and valuable. Members of other colleges had received invitations to visit these cliniques. The New York Hospital possesses its own magnificent University, founded by the millionaire Vanderbilt. Our professors had advised us to take advantage of this opportunity, and we did not allow it to be said in vain. Several ladies visited the cliniques with me regularly.

Upon our entrance, we distinctly noticed how different the various students were in their manner, and also the demonstrating professors. Some of them were cool and brusque, to the verge of rudeness; others, again, particularly amiable and obliging, offering the ladies the most advantageous places for seeing and hearing, and behaving in the most comradelike way.

We proved ourselves very modest in dress, behaviour, and speech, feeling ourselves like guests on sufferance.

After my medical dream was over, I turned to sundry other occupations.

I wrote for newspapers, indeed I had never given this up, and composed my great novel *Ererbtes Blut*, published by Hugo Steinitz, Berlin. I painted a great deal, an occupation I arrived at in an original manner, and also I gave lessons in foreign languages.

My painting began in this way.

After my recovery from the severe illness, I had sprained my foot, and was condemned to lie still for weeks and do nothing. I felt this very keenly, as

I had been accustomed to work from seven in the morning until seven at night at all sorts of things.

Then an acquaintance said to me, "Why don't you paint? You can do that even whilst lying down."

I said, "Why don't I fly?—I shouldn't want my feet for that. It is because I can't."

"Oh, you can do everything," she said.

"A good deal—yes! But not paint! I have never learnt drawing or painting."

That night I had a dream. Wilhelm von Kaulbach stood before me, held a palette in his hand, and said, "Only paint, and I will show you how to hold the brush, and how to put the colours properly on the palette." He did this, I paid good attention to it, awoke, and said to my husband, "Please go at once and buy me such and such colours, paint brush, and palette." I remembered the list of colours from my dream.

Serge looked at me at first as if I had gone mad, but I told him everything. He bought the painting utensils, and I painted. The first thing I did (without drawing first, that is, I fell to work at once with the brush) was a large basket of flowers. How?

First of all I finished the basket on canvas (I painted first in oils), then, just as one would have done in reality, I filled it with flowers, finishing each one entirely before commencing another. The result was that many artists said it was impossible that I had never painted before.

I then studied a few weeks with a lady who was a leading water-colour painter of flowers, and after that I earned a lot of money in America with my newly acquired art. Thus I found one occupation after another, and with every new year I took to myself a new "sense," as I termed it, by entering new paths of science which hitherto had been closed to me.

If my health had not always hindered me so much, I might have accomplished many beautiful things.

CHAPTER XXXIX

NOTWITHSTANDING all this, my main interest was the man for whose sake I had given up Europe and everything there—Serge, my husband. He, during the long years yonder, had developed into one of the best-known men in the States, and principally as the people's orator in German, as well as in English. He knew the latter so perfectly that at Harvard University a celebrated professor declared that "Serge von Schewitsch was one of the best and finest scholars of the English language in America."

It was wonderful and at the same time interesting in the highest degree, to see how he, who in daily life is one of the most silent and reserved of all the men I ever knew, developed into a burning, enthusiastic, inspired and inspiring orator as soon as he had a large crowd of people before him.

His interests all lay in, and were entirely devoted to, the people's party.

He, the born aristocrat, was, like so many Russians —I refer to Prince Kropotkin and Alexander von Herzen among others—heart and soul a social democrat. His gagged and martyred country had moved his soul to the deepest compassion by its sufferings, and had formed a glowing hatred within him against all oppression.

Let one example among many suffice here to illustrate the power his speech and personality exercised upon great masses. He was literally adored by the American "people," and during the twelve

years we had spent there, had made himself quite a unique and curious position. One can imagine how the opposite party used his aristocratic birth, his distinguished and elegant appearance, and the palpable evidences of the Russian aristocrat, as a reproach and as stimulating accusation against him. But his "people" stood by him faithfully.

It once happened that a great public open-air meeting was held by the people in the gigantic Union Square. It treated of the great movement which was headed at that time by Henry George, representative of Land Reform.

In the year 1886 the entire socialist party was one with Henry George, only to separate from him in 1887, as his ultimate aims differed from their own. Great debates often took place, and one of them was held in the biggest theatre in New York, when Serge von Schewitsch triumphed in a splendid speech over the equally eloquent Henry George. Only a few weeks divided that evening meeting in the Union Square from this evening's battle of eloquence. It had reference to an election campaign. I had gone there to hear my husband speak, and found myself with him on the platform. Was it due to my excitement? I suddenly felt very unwell, so that, by the time he had finished his great address to the mass, numbering perhaps 12,000, I begged him to take me back to our not very distant home.

We had been walking for about ten minutes when faintness overcame me, and we had to sit down on a bench.

Then crowds of people flew wildly past us, and a loud noise penetrated to us from Union Square.

Serge sprang up, and inquired excitedly of the people running past the cause of their flight. They answered in anxious haste—"Police! disturbance! clubbing!"

We understood at once, and jumped up from our seats. My fatigue disappeared, and I looked at

Serge, who in the greatest excitement exclaimed, "Now we must go back—you *must* be strong enough, for I must prevent grave disaster."

That I *was* so need scarcely be said. We flew towards the Square, on to the platform, and Serge to the railing, shouting to the terrible tumult raging in the masses below, "Calm! Moderation! I am here!"

The noise ceased at once; one heard voices calling, "Schewitsch is here, Schewitsch is going to speak! Silence."

And now he held this wildly indignant mass spellbound by his eloquence, calmed the raging furies, and by this prevented bloodshed which, without his intervention, would, with absolute certainty, have taken place. He ordered the people to keep quiet, not to defend themselves against the brutality of the police, but to break up without demonstration and go home. Rejoicings as deafening as the previous indignation rang out among the masses, "Long live Schewitsch! Schewitsch is right!" Then all happened as he had wished; the populace, though still murmuring, dispersed, leaving the police there as inactive lookers-on. But what had happened to provoke all these wild scenes?

One knows, and everybody then knew, that in free "Republican America," all those who think otherwise than those in power find there is nothing more brutal, more corrupt, than the New York police. Revolvers are only used in extreme cases, but with their clubs (terribly long weapons which are made of oak-wood and slung to leather straps) they inflict the most horrible wounds, and hew down mercilessly children, women, and defenceless men. They can vie well with the notorious Russian Cossacks.

The quite harmless election meeting had been denounced as "dangerous" at headquarters, and an "army" of one hundred to two hundred men of

these armed police had been dispatched to "club" the masses asunder.

The danger was that, as many people in America always carry loaded revolvers upon them, the men, heated by the enthusiasm of the speeches, would not remain calm at this villainous attack on their women and children, and might have had recourse to their fire-arms.

My husband had prevented this by the power of his eloquence, and by the magnetism of his personality. As I have said before, I have no political vein in me. Nevertheless, I was completely enthralled by him, and proud of the hero of the hour.

There were many such moments in American life, so that when we left the country after twelve years' sojourn, the working people saw him depart with great grief, and keep him to this day in enthusiastic remembrance.

I do not wish to describe my husband merely as a great man of the people, as a clever orator and journalist, but also as a passionate lover who fears no sacrifice. He is the same even to-day, if with brief intervals. I say with brief intervals, because the same thing applies to him as to most people. One can love for ever—but with interruptions. One must bridge over the pauses with a love that surmounts everything, that covers everything, and is victorious over everything.

Once in summer, wishing to escape from the burning heat of New York, I stayed on the beautiful sea-coast of Long Branch, which was still a very fashionable place. As Serge was editing the New York *Volkszeitung*, he was often unexpectedly detained from meeting me at the time we had arranged.

Long Branch can be reached either by train or boat in about two hours; trains and steamers do not run very frequently, but are extremely punctual. It often happened that for hours or days we could

not be together, and then when we did meet we made the best of our time, and no barriers existed for the *Weltstürmer*.

I had received a telegram, "I am coming for certain.—Serge." The train arrived—no Serge. I began to get terribly excited, when friends who were living with me consoled me with the remark that the steamer was not yet due. However, this did not bring me my loved one, and I was beside myself, weeping and terrified, when suddenly he stood before me! He had come upon the engine of a goods train; no others were running, and he induced the engine-driver to bring him by telling him that his "sick wife was expecting him."

The sympathetic American allowed him to stand by his side, and the usually elegant cavalier came to my arms black and covered with soot.

I passed another summer at Rockland Lake, charmingly situated on the Hudson. There two similar desperate arrivals took place.

One Sunday I expected Serge and an intimate woman friend to dinner. The place is an hour and a half distance by rail from New York, on the right side of the Hudson, and situated on an incline. I went to the station in a carriage to fetch them both. When they got out I was struck at once by the tired and heated appearance of my husband. My friend exclaimed whilst we were still embracing, "You ought to scold him well instead of kissing him. He has done something dreadful."

"What has happened again?" I asked uneasily.

Serge was making signs to her to be quiet, but she continued, "From Hoboken to * * * he ran after the train at a terrible pace for over half an hour, and jumped into it in a tunnel, where it always halts a few minutes. His appearance was such that I hardly recognised him, and of course he is half dead. I was afraid he would have a fit."

I looked at my Serge in horror, but he laughed

and said, "Yes, but I should not have been able to come otherwise, and you would have been frightened to death. The train went off under my nose. I reckoned on its slower pace up the Hudson Hill, and on the few minutes' delay before the tunnel; and as I am here, you see I calculated well."

Another time, at the same place, Serge was only able to take the train that left on the opposite shore of the Hudson. Here there was no communication across the river, which, where I was, was very broad. It was noon and one of those burning hot days known only in New York, which are feared even by the Brazilians there.

No hindrance, however, existed for this adventurous one. He managed to get a little boat, and, heedless of the heat, he rowed himself across—an hour and a half's work—and then rushed up the mountain, on which the hotel lay; this took another half-hour. The condition he arrived in is best not described.

I could narrate many more such adventurous love journeys in Europe and America, but those mentioned will be sufficient to show the strange passionate nature of the man who, in my later life, had replaced everything that was so cruelly taken away from me in my youth, and will also suffice to explain that a great love bound me to him which nothing is capable of destroying.

The reminiscences of those American years accumulate, and much still remains that would be interesting to relate; but I will not extend them too much, and will only mention a few well-known, original people, who at the same time offer a good picture of many American peculiarities. Two names stand out above all others in my mind's eye—Ottilie Assing and Fred Douglas. The former was a sister of Ludmilla Assing, and was brought up with her in her uncle Varnhagen von Ense's house. She was the cleverer, although the less pushing, of the two.

The influence of the learned men of her time, especially of the two brothers Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt, was distinctly noticeable, and her splendid education and refined manners, as also those of "Rahel" and of the aesthetics in Varnhagen's *salon.* She had come to North America full of the warmest compassion for the poor slaves of the Southern States, and had placed herself here at the disposal of the "liberators."

After all kinds of dangers which she had passed through in saving negro slaves who were persecuted by the incensed government of the Southern States, she became one of the heads of the society in New York for their help and protection. Some of them had succeeded in escaping from bondage; but, hunted and without means, they would have perished, if other members of that society had not sent them secretly one to another, and hidden the poor fugitives for months at a time, at the risk of death to themselves through the revenge of the Southerners.

Thus Ottilie Assing made the acquaintance of Fred Douglas, who had also fled from slavery. She had taken him in, and found in him an unusually gifted being.

His mother—a jet-black negress—had brought him into the world during the first half of the nineteenth century, on a plantation of the rich white American Lloyd, whom one suspected of being his father. Even as a little boy, when he saw the master's children reading and amusing themselves over what they read, he wept bitterly at not knowing this art. Against the master's wishes, he found means to learn how to read, reckon, and write.

He was on good terms with his possessor or, as was whispered, his father. The latter did not want any "educated slaves," and sold him at last into another state.

Fred always strove to extend his knowledge, and succeeded with the greatest difficulty in obtaining a

first-class school education. After his successful flight, which he describes very picturesquely in a book, *My Bondage and Freedom*, he came to Ottilie Assing, who instructed him still further. She kept him, I believe, hidden in her house for two years, and had the pleasure of seeing him become one of the most eminent men of the United States, and one who distinguished himself alike during war and peace.

He travelled all through England and Canada, also the whole of the Northern States, and proved himself everywhere a brilliant orator. In the national war which was fought for his black brothers, and which ended at last in their deliverance, he came to the fore. Lincoln, the most famous of all American Presidents, placed especial confidence in him, asked his advice, and took him into the State service. When my husband and I made his acquaintance in 1878, he was occupying the exalted post of Marshal of the United States in Washington. Karl Schurz —our great German compatriot—considered Fred Douglas among his intimate friends. Every child in America knew "Fred." We found in him a tall, handsome, leonine man, a type in whom the mixture of races (for he thought he had Indian blood in his veins) had had the happiest results. His rare and universal knowledge was particularly noticeable in America, where only the most elementary school education predominates. His fascinating manner and amiability had lost none of the softness of character which stamps the negro in his national songs, and which makes the men and women of this race such desirable servants. Our old friend Ottilie Assing had taught him the most perfect manner. In brief, we found in him one of the cleverest and pleasantest men whom we knew. He combined equally wit and humorous views of life with deep earnestness and learning.

When quite a young slave, and long before he was free, he had married a coal-black negress and had

a black family. These children, in spite of the brilliant education he gave them, remained mere niggers. However, he sent for the whole family, and lived in happy wedlock with his wife until her death.

Good Ottilie's ageing heart, as was natural, was centred upon the dark, handsome Fred—the handiwork of her spirit. She respected his bonds of wedlock, but no doubt hoped that when death released him from his coloured spouse, he would lay his freedom at her feet.

The poor thing was bitterly disappointed. Fred Douglas, whose hair was now snow-white, contrasting with the dusky colour of his skin, lost his wife through death, but he offered his hand to a younger white woman who had been his secretary when he was in the service of the State.

My friend Ottilie, who had hitherto been so brave, now in her despair committed suicide in Paris, in the Bois de Boulogne, whither she had journeyed in the anguish of her soul. She poisoned herself with cyanide of potassium on a lonely bench, and in this way miserably ended a life which had been so full of good and noteworthy deeds. Probably very few people besides myself knew the real reason of this tragic end.

I did not touch on these two exceptional beings merely to talk about them, but to show in the example of Fred Douglas how deeply racial hatred of the most educated American proved itself, even in the case of such a prominent man as he was.

After we had known him for two years, we were staying one summer at one of the smart bathing-place hotels, where more Americans than foreigners sought relief from the glowing heat of July and August.

I formed a closer friendship with two pleasant ladies—mother and daughter. We had many mutual interests and understood each other in most of the main questions of life. One day the conversation

turned on the prejudices of race among the Anglo-Saxons. "The Englishman in England," I said, "does not assert his superiority, but unconsciously assumes it; so in America. The foreigner, unless he understood how to impress people with exalted titles, such as 'Prince' or 'Duke,' never attains to quite an equivalent standing with the American born. As for the poor nigger, who even to-day occupies the same miserable position as during the time of slavery——" Both women looked in astonishment at me, and said, "Surely you don't expect us to regard the nigger as a human being?"

I replied in equal amazement, "Not the nigger who just put the iced water on the table for us, but the educated 'darkie.'"

"There is not a single coloured man capable of any kind of education," they disputed eagerly.

"What about Fred Douglas?" I said, playing this my great trump card.

They were both silent for a moment, then the mother said, "Well, yes, he may have acquired a little political knowledge, but you surely would not sit in the same room with Fred Douglas?"

"I? Yes! I love and honour him!"

The ladies stiffened visibly.

"Well, but you would never shake hands with him!" they added triumphantly.

"Not only shake hands; my husband and I have even kissed him heartily when we met again after a long parting."

"Oh, well," came long drawn out from the beautiful lips of the mother. Then she looked at her watch and said, "Mabel, it is time for church," and both sailed out.

From that moment they acknowledged me coolly, and never spoke to me again.

As I have said, Fred Douglas married a white woman after the death of his coal-black wife, and when already advanced in years, and Marshal of the

United States. The lady was of very good family, and because of her marriage was cast off by society. On the first Sunday after their wedding, when she appeared in the church she had attended since her childhood, accompanied by the man so much esteemed by the government, the acquaintances who usually sat next to her got up and left, leaving her alone with her husband. Fred Douglas, indignant at such behaviour, wanted to enforce his rights.

The following Sunday he appeared again, sat down on the deserted bench without his wife, whom he wanted to spare the pain of being treated as a pariah. Then the whole congregation rose up to leave the church. The Marshal remained alone with the clergyman, who, in these circumstances, gave up the service, and advised him rather to go to the coloured preacher of his "own people" in the Methodist Church.

Almost the same thing happened to him at the theatre, as is the case with most black people. He was told at the box office that not a single place was vacant. Theatre directors cannot act otherwise, for their theatres would be simply boycotted, if it occurred to them to sell a seat to a coloured man.

During the twelve years I remained in the States I never once saw a coloured man in a tramcar. He would have been treated in such a manner that the poor creature would never attempt it a second time. The same applied to hotels, restaurants, and bars.

The big New York paper, *The World*, once arranged a trial to establish a proof of this. They chose an elegant, well-dressed nigger as reporter. He drove in a carriage and pair to the best hotels and demanded rooms. A rapid glance of the porter was bestowed upon his beautiful trunks and handbags, then a regretful shrug of the shoulders followed, and invariably the same words, "I am very sorry, but we have not a single room free." The next one who drove up, also dispatched as traveller by *The*

World to control matters, had as many rooms as he wanted put at his disposal.

In the smart restaurants, where ocular evidence made it impossible to say that "no table was free," they did not even trouble to make an excuse, but simply said, "No coloured people admitted." The poor things were dealt with otherwise at the big bars. Here one allowed him to approach a table, then the bar-keeper placed himself quietly before him, and to everything the reporter asked for, no matter how much he let his dollars shine, he received the following answer, "Sorry, sir, we have run out of this." The instant the coloured man entered, all customers left the place.

The white reporter who entered directly after him received naturally all the cocktails and drink he chose to ask for.

It was so utterly against the principles of the Constitution that *The World*, in conscientiously exposing the whole affair, added a disapproving commentary on the Constitution itself; but matters remained as before.

When I remonstrated with a lady, who expressed her deep disgust of niggers, by remarking that they all liked keeping coloured servants, she replied naively, "Yes, they are incomparable as such—honest, good, and attached to us. The Southern niggers especially would allow themselves to be killed for their masters, and cannot be replaced by any other servants."

My reply, that beings with such superior qualities as those just cited could not be quite worthless, was answered with the assertion that they were not human beings, but at most a sort of superior animal, and it was a wrong to have liberated them from the slavery to which they belonged.

The Chinaman is not treated quite so badly, perhaps because he keeps himself so very much in the background, and has the same prejudice against the white man as the latter has for him.

One meets the pigtailed "son of the centre" in all tramcars and shops without the American shrinking from him as if he had the plague; but it is still a question whether this better treatment would continue if the Chinaman wanted to pose as an American, possessing full rights in religion as in everything else.

It seems, according to events which took place in California, not to be the same with the Japanese.

As with the Chinese, so with the nigger, a contemptuous hatred—which in our eyes is perfectly comprehensible—has developed in him against the white man. The nigger usually makes a comical distinction when speaking of his equals—even if the most elementary rags cover their nakedness—and designates them as "lady and gentleman" in the same sentence where they speak of our class as "man and woman."

One hears a hundred times the expression when a ragged old negress is pointed out, "That coloured *lady* spoke to that white *woman*" (pointing perhaps to an elegant American). The down-trodden race avenges itself with similar pin-pricks against its oppressors.

The haughtiness of the American does not confine itself to the coloured people. The Jew is exposed almost as much to their racial hatred, and if they had the power of excluding him from the rights of the white people, they would surely do it.

It is not seldom that in the U.S.A. big fashionable warehouses advertise in the papers, and post the same on the doors of their entrances: "Nothing sold here to Jews." It is true that some of the largest houses failed in consequence of this foolish procedure; they perished for the sake of their racial prejudices, for there, as in other places, the rich Jews are the principal purchasers.

Many hotels also permit themselves the luxury of announcing that "No Jews are accepted."

In conclusion, I will relate a true little story.

The most celebrated German doctor in all the States is Dr. Jacoby. His wife—although he is a Jew by descent, and she is just as famous a lady doctor—is of strictly Christian origin, being the American daughter of the well-known publishers, Putnam's of New York. But she has dark hair and big black eyes, and is called "Frau Dr. Jacoby."

A smart summer hotel had not omitted to announce its advertisement in the New York papers, "No Jews accepted." Frau Dr. Jacoby wished to push this impertinence *ad absurdum.* She drove to the hotel with her children and servants, mentioned her name that was so respected, and received in reply, "No rooms vacant." At this she answered, "I am Dr. Putnam Jacoby." "We are sorry; no rooms are vacant."

It was, however, at a time when the hotels could not possibly have been overcrowded, and Frau Dr. Jacoby learned later that after her departure, some "Gentile people"—as the Christians are called there—found rooms enough. She published the insult that had been done to her; the hotel no doubt suffered from it, but nothing was changed.

. . . . . .

Referring to interesting acquaintances, let me mention a certain intimacy with the man as with the artist Vasilli Vereschtschagin.

At that time I was writing the art criticisms for many big German papers in the States. Thus we met my husband's compatriot as soon as he arrived. He was the first who understood how to combine an exhibition of pictures with the arrangement of elegant *salons.* He transformed the compartments of his picture gallery into magnificent drawing-rooms by means of an immense quantity of beautiful old Persian carpets, costly specimens of Russian gold and iron work, and beautiful Russian laces.

In a Russian tea-room where Vereschtschagin's two non-Russian men-servants stood at the samovar

all day pouring out tea, a Russian lady sat at the piano and sang Russian national songs. One could imagine oneself transported from the Hudson to the Volga. The extraordinary fascinating personality of the artist himself, and this comfortable Russian interior, took something away from the gruesome impression of his terrible pictures of war, crucifixions, and horrors of all kinds. They inspired indeed both horror and awe, and were intended by the artist to do this. He liked to call himself the "Missionary of Peace," and nothing gave him more satisfaction than when his pictures roused disgust against war. He hoped by means of them to attain the eventual abolition of it. This was his life's aim. He painted over 1000 gruesome pictures to illustrate this, and was thus the greatest apostle of peace.

Everything in his mighty art is devoted to the horrors of war, from the terrible pyramid of skulls where the only living things are vultures wheeling round or hovering upon them, from the poor soldiers dying in the wretched martyr's bed in the field hospitals of wounds that have hardly been dressed, or the lonely sentinel on the Schipka Pass—"Nothing new from the Schipka Pass"—to the impressive scene of the roll-call.

As a contrast, his Himalayan pictures were most elevating and uniquely beautiful, and were in three parts—summit, centre, and foot, each a picture by itself, giving a true representation of the overwhelming mountains. Peace and mightiness are expressed therein as one seldoms finds in any landscape. I passed days with him in his showrooms, and mentally became very intimate with the strange, interesting man; I mourned sincerely when I heard of his tragic death in the horrible catastrophe of the blowing up of the battleship *Peter Pawlowski*. What a curious fate! In early youth his father had destined him for the navy. Life at sea did not appeal to him; he left it and became a painter and

led a nomadic life, until in death the sea reclaimed him, drawing the deserter with terrible force towards her once more. The sea conquered the enemy of the sea, just as war roused him to revolt against war.

Most of his pictures are held as national possessions of Russia.

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Whilst touching on this highest art, my memory comes upon a comical episode that proves how the average American then, as perhaps now, comprehended the term "art." One morning we saw in all the English New York newspapers an advertisement with the heading, "An Evening with Artists, or Art and Industry," which ran thus: "On the 8th of May an exhibition of the rarest art will take place in Madison Square Garden (the largest building in New York, with enormous halls). Artists, painters, designers, sculptors, and musicians of the very first rank will allow their works to evolve themselves before the eyes of the public. Artists will behave as if in their studios. Visitors are requested to appear in costume, and to chat with the artists. Our military friends are asked to appear in uniform. For the time, art and industry will appear like sisters, hand in hand in the adjoining magnificent exhibition. Entrance 50 cents (2s.)."

It may be imagined how much this advertisement roused our curiosity. We agreed to go that evening with a party of friends, and had a lively discussion as to whether we should go in costume or not; Serge and Keppler were against costumes, and fortunately their opinion prevailed.

At nine o'clock we all met in the large entrance hall, and a merry, expectant feeling of pleasure reigned among us.

What should we see? We entered the gigantic hall in the greatest state of curiosity. A gaping void stared at us. Perhaps a hundred guests were lost in the spacious hall that is calculated for tens of thou-

sands, and the faces that met ours looked so stupid and perplexed that this alone moved us to the greatest mirth. In the centre of the hall, which was quite nicely decorated with plants, we espied a platform about 150 feet in length, upon which the artists who would "behave as if in their studios" were posted. A piano was in the centre, at which a long-haired youth sat in ecstasy; he seemed to see nothing around him and mercilessly worked away at it. He was improvising. Next to him was an easel at which an incredible being stood, disguised as a painter. He also painted away without noticing his surroundings, absorbed in the sacred depths of his work. What it was I no longer know, nor did I at the time, distracted as I was by the overwhelming ludicrousness of the "sculptor." With a wild mane that stuck out in all directions, he ceaselessly turned his artist head in terrifying speed from his lump of clay on a pole to his model—a tiny cadet, apparently the sole "military" friend who had appeared in uniform, and who, with delightful dignity, seemed conscious of the great moment. He offered his ape-like profile to the art of the master. It was the ugliest face one could imagine; the lips were too short, it had a very pug nose, and expressionless fish-eyes; but no one else had presented himself as a model, and the artist was carried away by his task.

The other occupants of the platform were just as absorbed, just as funny, and just as poor in their ability. The poor things were paid by the managers of this incredible fête by the hour, to "behave as if in their studios." Our amusement reached its height when our friend Keppler, whom they all knew, joined the "colleagues," entered into natural conversation, and played up entirely to their importance. Even this was not the culminating point of this amusing evening. That came when we entered a mysterious, dimly lighted chamber, above which an inscription informed us "Here Art and Industry Unite."

At first we saw nothing. Then we discovered, on a table, a cardboard elephant (this was art), with a saddle in which several little wine-bottles supported a baldachin (this was industry). Next to this was a fortress, also in cardboard (elephant and fortress half as tall as a man), out of whose loopholes little scent bottles peeped out instead of cannon. Here also art and industry united. We could inspect nothing more for laughing. Some gentlemen were indignant at the enormity of the mystification, and did not see the unconscious irony of it all, grumbled over their lost time and gaping boredom, but were made fun of by us more lively ones, and laughed into silence. Later on they had to thank us, for a more amusing remembrance of American Art probably no one ever received. To this day that evening forms a topic of never-ending mirth for all those who took part in it.

CHAPTER XL

During the last year of our stay in America we had rented a charming little villa in rather a distant suburb of New York. Roselle could be reached by train (which often resembles a tramcar) in an hour, and the villa offered all modern conveniences. I could indulge in my love for animals, and kept dogs, chickens, little monkeys, and small parrots; and a nice little garden permitted me to grow flowers and vegetables.

Shortly before we moved into the villa, it happened that in the New York suburb of Hoboken, I met a man who fell down in the street with convulsions. He looked rather poor, but very clean, and as the incident took place just in front of our house, I had given him first aid (which was fresh in my mind from my medical studies). I asked a passing policeman to carry the man into the house. When everything had been done according to my instructions, and the patient had regained consciousness, and been fed, I soon recognised that it had been misery and absolute destitution that had struck him down—the poor thing! I let him tell me the often-heard story of wrecked existences in America, and then offered him a little spare room in which to rest until my husband—the friend of the poor and deserted—should return home, and with whom I would consult as to what was to be done next.

Considering that in our new villa we could make use of male assistance, we asked the poor tramp (as

such people without standing or occupation are called in America) to come with us to Roselle. He accepted joyfully, and in return for board and lodging he rendered little services—went errands, etc. He behaved very well for some weeks in spite of all the dismal prophecies of our friends, who declared I had picked up a thief and a loafer in the streets and would have the most awful experiences. Nothing of the sort occurred, but after a week he began to be dissatisfied with everything. He wanted his joint daily, and sometimes chickens or poultry. He said he had been accustomed to this in his native town, Hamburg. In short, he became so exorbitant in his demands that we had to give him notice, and cease our hospitality. So he wandered off again into uncertainty. His big bedroom on the third story was not to remain empty long.

One morning Serge and I stood at our bedroom window, when we saw a young man begging downstairs at the kitchen door. Our excellent Hungarian cook was just handing him out a large cup of coffee and food, which he fell upon as if famished. I went down full of compassion and asked him if he would help me arrange the garden, in return for board and lodging. He thanked me gratefully, said he had helped his mother to garden and understood everything very well. He remained.

So after the German tramp, Frank, the American one, became an inmate of our house. We discovered in him a most excellent young man. He was so grateful for the good shelter that he tried to make himself useful in every possible way, and, as a real American, he understood everything. If the electric bell or light went wrong, Frank came to the rescue; if joiner's or locksmith's work were needed, Frank did it excellently; if I came down early at 6 o'clock to plant and water in the garden, Frank had already done at 5 o'clock everything there was to do. In short, Frank was a jewel, had good manners, and was politeness itself.

One day Serge, who, as I said, was at that time editor of the New York *Volkszeitung*, and did other literary work, required a long English copy of a manuscript. He asked Frank to look for somebody for the purpose in the little neighbouring town. But our Frank said, "If my own handwriting is good enough, I will write it myself." After half an hour the vagabond appeared with the first sheets, in orthography and handwriting a faultless copy. "But, Frank!" exclaimed my husband, "what is the matter? You can do everything, yet you are here with us as——"

"Tramp! yes, say it! A demoralised vagabond," the young man interrupted him sadly.

"But *why*, Frank? Why?"

"Because I have a vagabond's disposition. My father is one of the leading clergymen in Philadelphia, and I was to have studied, but I can't—can't sit still, can't remain in one spot. I *must* tramp, must wander! I have had the best of situations, people are always satisfied with me, but there, it suddenly comes over me, I begin to drink, and must be off and away."

We looked at him in wonderment. He had never touched a drop of liquor whilst with us. So he wrote and worked, until one fine day he disappeared. The girls had seen him depart with a bundle; he had not said anything, but a nearly new suit of my husband's, which we had given him, was left behind, and he had written on a slip of paper, "I have not earned these."

A few days later I went down to the pantry of our villa, and saw there a whole battery of empty condensed milk cans heaped up. We never used condensed milk, so I asked in astonishment, "Where do all these empty milk cans come from?"

"From Frank," was the reply.

"From Frank—what do you mean? What could he have wanted with all this milk?"

"Here," and the cook pointed to a lot of empty

methylated spirit bottles. "He poured this into the open milk cans, and drank it for the past few days—every evening and all night."

Poor fellow! It had "come over him" again. Methylated spirits and milk; this horrible beverage had driven him away from us, where he had been so happy, as once it had driven him from his own home, to tramp on the highway.

A few weeks later I was alone at home one evening. I forgot to say that our villa was quite isolated and without neighbours. My only protection were my three dogs, of which two—a wolf-hound and a retriever bitch—were very big and dangerous. The Hungarian cook and the housemaid were rather nervous.

Serge was often busy with his paper far into the night, and a faithful friend, who in such cases stood by me, was at that time travelling in the west of the States. The evening in question was cold and rainy, so that at 10.30 pitch darkness reigned. Suddenly my dogs began barking furiously, and a moment later there was a loud knocking at the back door. I opened the window in the first story and called out, "Who is there?"

The enraged dogs were trying to get out at the door.

"We are two good friends. Frank has sent us! Please let us in!"

No! This was *too* much, even for me. To be looked up as a sort of vagabonds' refuge, that the tramps of the highway sent each other to us—no!

I expressed my regret at being unable to take in the two "gentlemen" of the highway—being a woman alone and at the dead of night.

And they disappeared, not greatly astonished. For Frank's sake I had thrown them down some money. Besides being "mother of refuge for vagabonds," I reaped at that time in my little villa a splendid testimonial from my above-mentioned

Hungarian cook. She told me the story herself in her broken English-German.

"Grä Frau knows very well in what a filthy state the last cook left everything. She was a pig; of course Madam dismissed her! Then the butcher came, and said the last cook had found you very particular because you didn't let your kitchen be made into a pigsty. Then I gave the butcher a piece of my mind. I said, '*My* lady is a *real* lady. She doesn't look after anything and doesn't understand anything—and *that's* a real lady.'"

There I had it, and at the same time *her* idea of a lady!

One might still allude to funny episodes of quaint, original creatures and strange personalities, and their introduction into these reminiscences would surely amuse and interest people as "human documents." But they would extend my Memoirs *ad infinitum*, and I must therefore postpone doing this until, perhaps, some later period.

After much longing, the time of our return home at last approached. Europe was opened up to us once more. I related already how the Tsar sequestrated my husband's entire fortune. After long years of effort his excellent brother Senator von Schewitsch had succeeded in neutralising this confiscation, on the condition that we should return to Russia.

The idea was very welcome to me, because, with the exception of California, I had never felt myself at home in America. Serge, no doubt, felt it very much to have to quit the field of his successful political activity to return to a country where he could find everything—except, indeed, political freedom.

But as we already had suffered too much under the nightmare of pecuniary difficulties, we could not fail to bless the prospect of relief from these. Serge's fortune had considerably increased of late years, owing to his inheritance from his deceased mother, and the future appeared to us in a brilliant

light, in spite of the heavy heart with which the "man of the people," who hung heart and soul to his self-chosen work, had to bid farewell to all his devoted ones.

If to-day, after having passed so many years in the longed-for old world again, I look back on our American sojourn, my experiences there seem to me (even those which at the time appeared worthless and uninteresting) to stand out in a much more powerful light, and to be of the highest importance to my development.

I went over there as a woman, hungering for life, restlessly seeking, never knowing equipoise of soul, always hoping to find in the *next* day, or even in the next experience, that which everybody can find within himself alone.

Even before crossing the ocean I had known what trouble meant, and during the latter years had learnt to battle with it a little, and unconsciously I profited by this lesson. But it was only in America that I went through the great school of practical life. In it I learnt that *everything* in our fate takes place in accordance with the iron law of cause and effect; that in every sorrow, as well as in every happiness, we ourselves are the originators of our own deeds and thoughts.

PART VIII

Scotland—London—Rewedded—Meeting H. P. Blavatsky again—Return to Russia—Riga—Russian hospitality—Severe illness—Berlin—At the portals of death—New life.

CHAPTER XLI

In the spring of 1890 we returned to Europe in a Scotch steamship, as I wished to pass the summer in the Highlands.

How delighted we were when, in the dawn of a summer morning, the beautiful green shores of old Ireland rose up before our eyes! Yet we only considered ourselves as really "home again" when the ship stopped at Glasgow, and we left it, bidding farewell to our kind captain.

Then followed a gloriously happy time in Scotland. We, who had so thirsted for Europe, enjoyed the beautiful Highlands with their towers, lakes, castles, and mountains, more than others did. We had lived too long in the matter-of-fact, dollar country not to appreciate to the full the entire charm of places so interwoven with legend. I found in every corner, and in all the houses, palaces, and citadels of Glasgow, Stirling, and Edinburgh, the atmosphere of the days of unhappy Mary Stuart, of whom I was an enthusiastic admirer. Darnley, Rizzio, Bothwell—all stood before me in imagination, and beautiful Mary Stuart herself had probably never lived more really than she did then in my mind. Every varying picture of her arose, although none of them could reproduce the magical charm of the seductive woman, who is as much revered to-day by her Scotsmen as she was once when she languished, an unfortunate prisoner, in the Tower of London.

We were delighted, above all, with Edinburgh—

the Athens of the North. It is really the most beautiful and finely situated city in Europe, not even excepting Naples and Geneva.

After a few all too fleeting weeks, we were obliged to tear ourselves away from Scotland, for there was still a difficulty before us which must be overcome. According to Russian law, our marriage had to be sanctioned by a "pope" of the Greek Catholic Church. A civil marriage alone, such as ours in America, was not sufficient to allow us to be regarded in Russia as legally married. We resolved to let this religious marriage take place in England, and went for this purpose to London. We lived there quietly for a time in the charming suburb of Teddington, with its beautiful Bushey Park and Hampton Court.

Now came the ludicrous part of the situation. We could not be married in accordance with Russian law, because England regarded our previous marriage as absolutely legal.

The Russian priest could not fulfil any ecclesiastical ceremony before the civil marriage had been solemnised in London. At the Registry Office in London we were asked what we wanted, as we were already legally united. A marriage solemnised in America is completely legal in England.

"But not in Russia!" we exclaimed.

"But that has nothing to do with us! As far as we are concerned, you are married."

There we were! married both too much and too little! At last we found hearing and consideration with the Archimandrite of the Greek Church.

He demanded that the London Registry Office should confirm the fact of our legal marriage in New York ten years previously, and, when this had been done, amid much laughter of the English officials, who were unaccustomed to such continental conditions, we were at last permitted to go through the rather theatrical marriage ceremony in the beautiful Greek church.

So my husband Serge and I are in reality three times married—first by the New York Registrar, secondly by the confirmation of this by the London Registrar, and thirdly by the Greek Church in London.

Whether all this official riveting would have held us together without our all-surviving love, I greatly doubt.

The little winged god of Love, who was not to be defied by age and changeful fate, was victorious over all these human arrangements. Under his protection, as soon as we had accomplished the purpose for which we had come to England, we travelled to Russia again by water—home!

It was hard to part from the dear friends who had shown us so much hospitality during the months we had spent in England.

We had found our dear, faithful old friend, the wonderful and much-discussed Helena Petrowna Blavatsky, again in London, and passed several weeks in her house, which was the headquarters of the Theosophical Society. This stay in London remains in my memory as the most interesting time passed with interesting people. Names such as Annie Besant and Herbert Burrows—both of whom were at that time immersed in Socialism—were just then on the point of taking the great step from a pure materialistic standpoint to the views of Indian theosophy, under the direction of the remarkable and fascinating Blavatsky. As before stated, we were already her adherents in New York, and were now again under the spell of this woman, who was as kind as she was intellectually great. I have already devoted a little book especially to her and the teachings which she first introduced to the West, so that I must not dwell upon it at length here.

We were very anxious to reach Russia, Serge's real home. We had decided to choose Riga as our abode. Various reasons induced me to do this.

Petersburg and all the interior of Russia were out of the question, being unsuited to my health. The name Schewitsch was well known and respected in Riga. My husband's eldest brother, a particularly noble and humane man, had been Governor of Livonia for a long time, and had made himself very popular on account of his impartial dealings with Germans, Lithuanians, and Russians. As, however, his humane and unprejudiced attitude did not suit the party then in power, he had been recalled from his post just before our arrival, much to the regret of all classes of this mixed population. Since then, he occupies a much higher post in the service of the State, but in Livonia his memory is treasured with fidelity and reverence, mingled with longing regret.

This devotion to the brother paved the way to a very pleasant sojourn for Serge. He resolved to take up his old profession of barrister, on his own account, instead of State service. He was especially fitted for this, both on account of his eloquence, the knowledge of the two national languages, and many other talents.

In order to accustom himself again to this profession, he entered the office of one of the lawyers in Riga, and everybody prophesied a great future for him, when, unfortunately, I became very ill, and this put an end to his plans.

However, before speaking of this, I will relate how warmly we were received in Riga. We had alighted at the hotel "Frankfurter Hof," and were very comfortable there, but nevertheless had intended taking a flat. After the death of his mother, Serge had inherited all her most valuable furniture, which his brother the Senator had transported to the family estate near Wilna Minsk, in order to save us the expense of housing it, which would have amounted in all those years to a very considerable sum. Everything now was to be sent by van to Riga. This was only possible during the winter, by sledge, on account of the condition of the Russian roads.

We should therefore have had to wait patiently for several months had it not been that good-natured help was offered us. Immediately on our arrival at Riga we had met Consul Schnackenburg, the most amiable old gentleman in the world. We soon made friends with him and his clever, interesting wife, and they came to see us one afternoon.

The Consul, leaning back comfortably with his cup of tea, said in his kind way, "Now, listen, my dear friends, to what my wife and I have thought of. As a good old merchant, I am, of course, a good reckoner, and have just made out that it would cost a terrific sum of money if you were to keep this flat, with everything, in this hotel. I therefore propose to you that you should go at once and find a suitable flat for yourselves."

"That is all very fine," I replied quickly. "No matter how nice that may be, we shall only have our furniture in the middle of the winter."

"Let me finish speaking, most beautiful and dearest of women," replied the old gentleman, smiling. "You find the dwelling, and my wife and I will take the responsibility of everything else."

We both opened our eyes wide at this, and must have looked blankly astonished, for the two dear old people burst out laughing heartily. We neither of us understood what they meant, until, stroking his long snow-white beard, he continued, "In our gigantic house, in the upper rooms, which are uninhabited, we have enough furniture stored to fit up half a city. We inherited it, and it is all good, solid old-fashioned stuff. You will do us a favour if you will help us to prevent the things being devoured by moths."

We were speechless, then the Consul's wife said, "I will fill the sideboards and cupboards with linen, glass and china, silver, and cooking utensils. In short, you will have to trouble about nothing except moving in."

Before we could realise that this inconceivable

thing was no fairy tale, before we could refuse to accept so much kindness, the charming people were pressing us to look for a flat immediately, and we all started together to find a suitable place. This was soon found, and we took six nice large rooms, with three servants' rooms, balconies and gardens. Within a few days they were completely furnished with beautiful old furniture which would have delighted the eye of any collector, all comfortable and solid—pictures, chandeliers, lamps, nicknacks; in fact, an entire furnishing in which no detail was wanting, and into which we ensconced ourselves as comfortably as if the things had belonged to us since the time of our grandfathers.

We felt as if we had been transported to wonderland, and even to-day I regard the two touchingly kind, noble old people as a species of fairy spirits, and am eternally grateful to them. The old gentleman has long since gone to his eternal rest, and I am glad that my husband, after he had come into the possession of his fortune, was able to prove his gratitude by rendering him a considerable service, and thus relieving the kind old man's heart of a heavy care during his last days. In reality, however, we could never repay what this splendid old couple had done for us out of pure warmth of heart.

They proved their kindness anew to me during the time of my severe illness that same cruel winter.

I was obliged to remain in bed the whole winter, and suffered unspeakably. Then the dear old Consul drove out to the country himself, in the bitter cold, to procure new-laid eggs (the only nourishment I could take for a long time). He brought the little basket containing them to my bedside, with the most pathetic care, and found sufficient reward in a smile from his poor sick friend.

Blessed be his memory for all time!

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In consequence of this severe illness, I got to know

very few people in Riga. In the spring—still very ill—I was taken to the coast.

The sympathy that the dear Schnackenburgs had shown us seemed to have extended almost to the entire population of Riga, as we received proofs of kindness from all sides. When, after nearly a year, I was removed to Berlin for a serious operation, half the town followed the stretcher on which I lay to the port. I was deeply moved at the many blessings that were showered on me, also at the sympathy proffered by many people I did not know, who kissed my hands and the hem of my garments.

Quite as much sympathy was shown me on the steamer which took us to Stettin. My dear doctor Von Haacke, whom I shall never forget, and the good captain of the ship carried me down to my cabin themselves, and put me to bed with motherly care. Thus I preserved only nice memories of my dear Riga. Later on, they all confessed that none of them had ever hoped to see me again; they considered me doomed. Even my excellent doctor had not hidden from me that the approaching operation was a life or death one, and that there was only one man in the world with whom there was a chance of success, and that was Doctor Olshausen of the Berlin University. Although it was very risky, after a long consultation with my husband, I decided upon it, because I saw how much he hung upon the only possibility of saving my life, and how ready he was for every sacrifice of money and patience.

At that time the Baltic provinces were passing through a very interesting political phase, in which the seed was sown for that dreadful revolution which took place after 1905, when the small and once so flourishing provinces of Livonia, Esthland, and Courland almost perished.

In the year 1890 the Russian language was made obligatory in schools. A cry of indignation arose in consequence amongst the German nobility and the

"literate." The last term is used to describe all those of that strange little country on the furthermost shores of the Baltic who have enjoyed a university education, such as doctors, jurists, theologians, and philosophers, even if they have never been actively employed in literary work, according to the conception of our Western European ideas.

Sensible and unprejudiced people do not regard the matter in a tragic light, for the Russian Government had been threatening for twenty years to Russianise the Baltic provinces; and although one does not wish to defend this, the threatened evil might have been avoided, if the children, who were at least Russian subjects, had earlier been made to learn Russian as well as German. The Lithuanians, that is to say, the *people*, were more clever. They had mostly had their children taught in the Russian language, and were more easily able to conform now to the enforced law. One could but feel sorry for the little scholars, who, from one day to another, and without understanding a word, were compelled to do all their school tasks—reading, writing, and arithmetic — in Russian; but sympathy with the children strengthened anger against the parents for ignoring all wisdom and foresight, and placing the little ones in this position. One could but admire the quiet and continuous work of the Lithuanians, who were so despised by the Germans, and who had already caused their offspring to be taught in Russian, or now set everything in motion in order to facilitate their learning the Government language in as short a time as possible.

Yes, these contemptuous Germans!

They had been living for centuries in the country whose original inhabitants were just these Lithuanians and Esthonians, and instead of going hand in hand with them against their Russian oppressors, instead of gaining a little the love of the people on whom in all serious moments they were materially dependent (as

had been shown these last years), they kept them in humiliating submission, shook their fists at them, and treated them, in all conditions of life, with the greatest contempt. The worst term of reproach the Germans there could use was, "He is a Lithuanian." They sowed the wind, and to-day, of course, reap the whirlwind. They treated them on the same principle as the Americans treat the blacks; and as they behaved similarly to the Russians, the consequence was that they stood alone in their hour of need, and had cultivated enemies on all sides. The Germans may have found a certain satisfaction in showing their haughtiness towards, and contempt of, other nations, but their behaviour was certainly not wise from a political point of view.

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So we left Riga in September, just a year after our arrival, and were approaching a future full of anxiety. It was only my poor husband who was so anxious, for neither before nor after in my life did I feel so happy, so calm, and so collected as in those days before the operation. How the people around me regarded my fate and chances of life was clearly visible in a comical little episode which took place on the steamer. Our pilot was an original old Pomeranian, and it seems I had struck him by my deathly paleness and suffering appearance. During the fine weather that accompanied our arrival in Stettin, after heavy storms, I was on deck lying on the stretcher I had brought with me from Riga, and lay there peacefully, rejoicing at the universal kindness and sympathy that everybody offered me. The old pilot came up to me and said in an impossible dialect, and with pathos, "Good gracious, my little daughter, what do you look like? What is the matter with you?"

I told him also that I was being taken to Berlin for a serious operation.

"Oh, gracious, my little daughter, you are going to certain death, you look like a corpse already.

No, little daughter, no, you will never get over it! You are too ill!"

I was obliged to laugh heartily at this peculiar way of expressing sympathy. The old man gave me various bits of advice. "I was not to trust the doctors, for they often did such foolish things. My husband ought to look after me properly, etc."

Ridiculous as these words were, he meant well by them; and when we landed in Stettin, nothing could prevent him, in spite of his dignity as pilot, from assisting our man-servant and a bearer to carry me on shore.

In the meantime, in Berlin my dear and faithful friend Siegwart Friedmann had arranged everything for my comfort, and in a first-class private hotel we could quietly await the day that was to see me taken to the *clinique*.

Here again I had touching proofs of the most noble human kindness. Women with whom I was not even intimate, but with whom I was merely on a friendly intellectual footing, travelled long distances to Berlin when they heard of the difficult time I had to go through, in order to stand by me and stay with me until the last moment. All who came near me were astonished to see how happy and collected I was in meeting this decisive hour.

I have made it a duty to myself not to touch on the occult and supernatural side of my manifold life in these Memoirs, therefore I cannot relate how I arrived at this feeling of unlimited calm and happiness. Let this much only be disclosed, that all this was closely connected with my studies of the ancient Indian Vedanta philosophy, and with my theosophical views of life.

That wonderful and oldest of all philosophies teaches us what we all bear within us from time immemorial; that death is only a change of condition; that our body is merely the clothing of a spirit which is everlasting, ever developing, ever reborn in a new form.

That truth was newly awakened within us by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, and lived in Goethe when he said to Eckermann, "If I work ceaselessly until my end, nature is bound to bestow on me another form of being when my present one is no longer capable of harbouring my spirit."

Who could fear death if this great truth had become as convincing as it was to me, as convincing as the feeling of this present earthly life? Yes, who, standing within the truth, would not greet the "earnest friend" in gladness and silent happiness? if, suffering as I was, he felt his present body only a burden, that hindered him from completing that which the Spirit had recognised as the ideal, and a necessity to him? I was thus in an uplifted and happy mood, far from every-day life, raised aloft in a spiritual atmosphere, into which no earthly terror, no fear of death, nor petty earthly considerations could penetrate.

My nurses also said during these last days and hours, "This is unearthly! We have never seen such a state of mind before a life and death operation."

How often I have wished since then that I could feel once more that sensation of happiness, that exalted peace and illumination, which came to me during those days when all the loving ones round me looked on me with uncomprehending kindness, full of compassion. Later on, when I was given back to the world's turmoil, I never found it again. One thing only has remained to me: I know no fear of death. Indeed, there lies within me a certain yearning love towards the all-healing God, and in His hour of triumph I hope that I shall find once again the ecstatic uplifting of that time.

CHAPTER XLII

I FOUND in my genial operator, Professor Dr. Robert Olshausen, a kind and considerate man, who charmed me at once.

Shortly before the great day, he and I had a long discussion, in which the clever man said to me, "You see, I must have just as great confidence in your strength and vitality as you have in my science, otherwise we shall not succeed, and I cannot perform the operation." At the same time, he looked at me so convincingly with his kind, eager blue eyes, that, inspired for "our" task, I stretched out both hands towards him and exclaimed, "Now, you can make mincemeat of me! It is all the same to me—I don't mind!"

Well, it was almost that! When the Professor opened me up, he found my interior in such a desperate condition that he shook his head and said, "No, I can't do it; it is impossible."

He only performed the operation on being persuaded to do so by his assistants. The terrible task lasted three hours and a half, instead of three quarters of an hour, as he had supposed possible in the worst case.

My poor husband had to wait in anguish of soul all that time in the doctor's private room. Three dreadful hours, that might well count in a man's life! When the doctor went in to him, tired to death, and pale from the terrible exertion, the ominous words were uttered, "The operation is over, but your wife

will scarcely be able to survive the day, for it is almost certain that peritonitis will set in; and then——" The exhausted doctor sadly left my despairing Serge.

Then Siegwart Friedmann proved to him his deep and encompassing friendship. He cared for him as a brother, and helped him over those dreadful days.

But the great surgeon had made a mistake; and this I realised in my subconsciousness, when the physician still despaired of being able to rouse me from the heavy narcosis into which I had fallen. *I* knew it. I *had* to live, and experience still much—very much—joy and sorrow.

My operators and nurses called me for many years "the miracle of the clinique of the Berlin University," just as I still call that splendid man, Professor Dr. Olshausen, my "second mother." Life was given me through him a second time.

Let me here openly express once more my deep, inward, and lasting thanks to him and his great science, thanks which the kind, modest, learned man always turned aside with touching simplicity whenever I spoke of it to him personally. "Do not thank me for your recovery," he then said, "but yourself and your own wonderful nature. You *are*, and remain, a miracle." Very well! Certainly my strong and ever recuperative constitution *was* a good supporter of his science; but how far would my "nature" have taken me, without his knowledge, his courage, his small, sure, skilful hands? Therefore the splendid man, whether he will or not, must accept my thanks, with those of hundreds of others whose lives have been saved by him.

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My force and relative recovery came back to me, but very slowly. Then, as now, I realised the truth of what the doctors told me before the operation, when they said that I should only make a *relative* recovery, and never again be as capable of resistance as one who had never gone through this dreadful illness.

I have remained a sickly woman, with heart and nerves weakened for ever.

Nevertheless the happiest years of my life followed these times of sickness.

The Tsar had restored all rights of possession to my husband, and we revelled in the well-being of our material means.

In order to offer me as much facility as possible for my recovery, we travelled for six years. We kept a *pied-à-terre* in Munich, as in this keenly artistic town, where the advantages of a big city are united so pleasantly with those of *not* too big a one, we felt ourselves the most at home.

We passed the winter in Naples, Florence, Montreux, and the summer in Switzerland. The autumn generally brought us back to Munich.

How I enjoyed all this! Just as completely as I had peacefully and calmly closed with life, I now enjoyed all that which I had won back again, and to the full.

I owe my highest delights to nature, and two wonderful sublime moments stand out with particular clearness in my soul.

The first time was when I went on the funicular railway to Monte Salvatore, and was lifted above the lake of Lugano, a year and a half after my life was saved. I could not mount to the summit, as walking was very difficult for me, but I sat just beneath it, on a beautifully situated bench, and waited for Serge, who had mounted to the top. Before me lay the panorama of the eternal snow giants, from Monte Rosa to the Jungfrau, in overwhelming glory.

Before my soul arose the picture of the woman, sick unto death, who had been transported on a stretcher to Berlin, amid the compassion of others; and I compared the picture of that time with this, if not strong yet comparatively healthy woman, full of the joy of life, seated here, high above mighty precipices, allowed to stand above all the petty doings

of the world, and intoxicate herself with the magnificence of God's nature in an infinite feeling of happiness. There are moments of excessive feeling that can only be realised by those to whom death has appeared, as with me, after a long illness, in the shape of a longed-for but happily avoided deliverer. A mood of such near proximity to God, and such gratitude, cannot be expressed in mere words. Loving thoughts of blessing flowed too across to my "second mother," Professor Olshausen, to whom I owed also this hour of highest ecstasy.

The second of such very rare moments came one early morning on the summit of the Wengern Alp, where we spent a few weeks of the next summer, which was a very hot one. By this time I saw my way more clearly in life, had revelled in many entrancing scenes in the most distant south and in the farthest north, and thanks to the never-failing care of my husband, had been able to enjoy everything that love and material means could give. I had got accustomed to happiness.

That night, far up in the simple little hotel of the Wengern Alp, was an exceptional one. I could not sleep because the full moon, in magical beauty in the heavens, threw an almost uncanny rosy light on the mountain kings Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau, so that the eternal snow glistened like gold dust. Again and again this glory of God drew me to the window. In the immense stillness of the loneliness of the mountains, the thundering of the avalanches, that crashed from time to time from the opposite heights, was the only earthly sound. It was as if one heard the breath of God, and in deepest reverence one's heart stood almost still.

The highest and all-surpassing beauty was yet to be beheld. The moon paled. The next time I went to the window a faint gleam lay over the immeasurable snow, and I was about to withdraw, sighing that this remembrance also should slip away

into the past. My eyes were still turned towards the silver summit of the Jungfrau when—I shall never forget that moment—the extreme point of the summit glittered like a gigantic diamond in a thousand prismatic colours—a gleam of the rising star of the morning had touched it!

All around me lay the pale light of dawn. Perhaps in that second I had beheld a picture that thus, and only thus, can appear once at that particular moment of the year (as the sunrise always takes place at a different angle over this summit). The spectacle lasted only one fleeting second; then the king of day appeared, dispersing the grey veil of the morning in proud, glowing supremacy. Once more I was shaken to the depths of my soul, thankful that I was allowed to witness this, and to enjoy it thus. A great joy leapt up in my heart, which, more surely than the most fervent prayer of thanks, penetrated to the infinite goodness of the Great Almighty.

CHAPTER XLIII

In the years that lay between those most happy ones of my life and to-day—when I transcribe these reminiscences—I had to pass through much sorrow and the greatest difficulties. Of these I shall say nothing. Most of the people who caused my sorrow are still alive, and, as I have learnt much—very much—from this bitter sorrow, and as it has always led me to higher development and purified me to find a deep understanding of the logical guidance of fate, I will bless even this experience, and wander peacefully onwards to the end.

During these years my spirit knew also much gladness, through newly forged bonds of friendship, as well as the meeting once more with dear old friends of bygone times. They all had remained as faithful as if we had parted but yesterday—Franz von Lenbach, Paul Lindau, Ludwig Barnay, Adolf Sonnethal, Felix Philippi, Fifi Gosemann, the Countess von Prokesch-Osten, and many others. More especially I was touched by the devotion of women. There were, and still are, some who, during all the years in which life had tossed me about in wild struggles, who themselves never diverged a hair's breadth from the stereotyped path allotted to them by prescribed circumstances, and who were highly esteemed in the elevated position they occupied in life, welcomed me on my return home as a long-missed friend and "prodigal son"—as such I had to regard myself—for whom they gleefully killed the fatted calf.

With them, these truly refined and noble souls, it is granted to me to close the evening of my days.

Among the eminent men with whom later on friendship brought me into contact, the genial Norwegian Björnstjerne Björnson stands out for me as the most interesting. A truly magnificent man, as warm-hearted and inspiring a poet as a man. We made his acquaintance, and that of his elderly but still beautiful wife, at a time when he had just completed his *Konig*.

I raved about his play *Beyond Human Power*, which had just appeared in German, and placed this wonderful work far beyond the *Konig*.

This led to a long controversy in our own house. He particularly recommended his *Konig* to me, for, as with most creators, his last work seemed to him to be his most valued one. I often had to read it aloud to him, and he drew my attention to the beauties of every part that had become especially dear to him. I conceded these beauties to him very willingly, but they could not touch *Beyond Human Power*. Then he stood up before me, the wonderful old athlete, his beautiful, white curly hair standing straight up, and the large glowing eyes flashing toward me, defending his "youngest child, whilst I championed glowingly his "last but one."

We were two enthusiasts, who very soon understood each other in close friendship. There was no more interesting man on earth than the splendid old son of the North when he reared himself up, his thoughts gushing forth upon some great idea.

His faulty and often most funny German, blended with other languages, lent him yet another and especial charm. I shall never forget one evening when we were conversing on the Dreyfus affair, which was then the great theme. It was delightful to hear the enthusiastic poet rave about the work of salvation that quite engrossed him. My husband answered him, and the two great orators offered

us, who were allowed to listen to them, an intellectual feast.

Although agreeing on the main points, their views often strongly diverged in details. Björnson would not see that Schwarzkoppen had not been able to give up the documents in question without making himself a traitor to Germany. Serge defended his manner of acting, and the old Viking, much to our amusement, became quite indignant, and did not spare strong language; but we had never seen him so human and so eager over his subject. We enjoyed even his coarseness—for it showed his great strong nature, which, wherever it entered the lists for the oppressed and unhappy, acknowledged neither consideration nor reason. He fought like his Norse forefathers, hurling blocks of stone around him. Woe to him who stood in his way! they hit without regard to persons.

He was also splendid when he spoke of his beloved Norway, and of his aged mother (who lived still, at that time, and from whom he had inherited his never-failing good spirits), and of the splendid patriarchal customs of his country.

We also naturally discussed Ibsen, and I said that I could not agree with the later works of the great "describer of people." They seemed to me unnatural and made up. I raved about his earlier works, but I only could keep pace with him as far as *Die Wildente.*

At first he laughed joyfully: "You dare to say what I always think, and never have the courage to express! But you call my great friend and poet-colleague a 'describer of persons'?" Now he became quite serious, and the glowing eyes looked pensive, as if he saw far out beyond all that surrounded him, far into his distant northern land. "Yes, he has certainly created types of all sorts of men in *Nora* and *Rosmersholm*, and his most brilliant work is *Peer Gynt.* Yet he told the world something untrue

when he made them believe that our Norwegian folk are such a dismal, brooding, melancholy crew as he portrays them. No, we are jolly, lively fellows, going forth full of life and courage to meet destiny. No, we are no Ibsen people!"

I believed him, for as he and his whole radiantly happy family presented themselves, the Norwegians formed a happy, sunny picture. But the old grumbler up yonder was probably right also. Each great poet regarded his people through the medium of his own nature, and intensified the picture with genius and art.

I made another valuable friendship through Björnson. One fine afternoon the couple paid us a visit, and scarcely were we seated—he with a little glass of punch, and we ladies with our cup of tea—when Frau Caroline began: "Listen, Björnstjerne comes to you with a request, in which I join him."

I looked at him eagerly. "Yes, you read Amely Skram's novel *Verraten* with so much delight."

I replied, "You can truthfully say 'with enthusiasm,' just as I did her magnificent and terrifying work *Professor Hieronymus*."

"Well, the poor thing is so dreadfully unhappy. We have just come from Copenhagen, where we found her so miserable that she did nothing but weep. You can help her, Madame Helene," he concluded, and looked at me convincingly. My heart beat high in excitement and joy. "I," I said, astonished; "how?"

"Write to her," he said.

"Yes, but *what*?" I asked most eagerly.

"Only just as you *are*—nothing very especial. What she needs is a warm-hearted human being. She is only surrounded by Da-a-a-nes" (he drew the word out with all the mockery and contempt which the Norwegian has for the sister nation). "Write to her from the heart—*from your heart*. That will console her."

I was very happy at this confidence in me, went at once to work, wrote to her about her magnificent and terrible books, which I knew from the Björnstjernes were based on horrors she had gone through herself. I offered her my close friendship through the intermediary of our esteemed friend Björnstjerne and his wife Caroline.

Almost by return of post came her wonderful answer. She was happy, and touchingly grateful, as the great poet had foreseen, and our correspondence grew more and more intimate. Her last letter shall find a place here. It ran thus:

KJBHAVN (abbreviation for Copenhagen),
HASERSGADE 11, 30/4/'97.

HONOURED AND DEAR WOMAN—What have you thought of me during this long time that has passed since I received your portrait and your so amiable letter? Oh, I have thought of you so often, so often—have looked so frequently at the two faces, and was so grateful for everything—everything. What a handsome couple you are—you and your husband.

I will try and write in English, German is so insupportably difficult to me. It makes one sorry not to be able to say what one wishes, but only what one is able to.

Then followed in English:

Do not be vexed with me for having been silent for so long. I have just passed through a difficult time—not only because I had such a bad illness, but because all kinds of care and misfortune came upon me.

I am trying to reproduce the original and faulty expression of her English. She continues:

There are times in the lives of people when it seems that one cannot bear it any longer, and yet it is of no use speaking of it. Nobody can help the other; we must bear everything alone, quite, quite alone—and try to battle through it all.

Here follow a few solely personal and family allusions. Then:

I could not avert the misfortune—no, no—one cannot help another—it is like this in the world. But you are happy,

are you not? I can see it in your picture, and more still in the noble face of your husband. You must thank him ten thousand times for having sent me his drama (this was a modern Russian tragedy reproduced in several theatres, and called *Elena Prawdin*). The piece is magnificent, with the exception of the last act. There are the most beautiful things and thoughts in this work. I read it with breathless excitement, but the last act ought to be altered.

My husband read it, and is of the same opinion as I am. He was very enthusiastic over the first acts. He would like very much to translate it for the Danish stage; he has translated many plays, and he has much luck with them in Scandinavia, and is very well known as a poet. He has not written as many books as I, but they are much better than mine [an amiable but hardly applicable modesty].

The letter ends:

Oh, my dear, unknown friend, how much I wish you understood my language [Danish], when I could speak to you so much better from the depths of my heart, could tell you of the joy I felt on receiving your letter, in all the warm-hearted words with which you speak to me.

German now followed the English:

Why are you ill? you ask. Why? Fate has willed it.

My constitution was so strong — so strong — otherwise I should have died long ago. I have suffered so much — so much in my life, and perhaps I have only myself to thank for it. Everything one sees depends upon the point of view. Yes, what good can it do? One can't alter one's self. But now adieu! With a thousand greetings.—Your friend,

AMELY SKRAM.

On reading through my letter, I see there must be faults.

Shortly before receiving this strange letter the heaviest sorrow fell upon me. I will not write about it here, as the people who were the cause of it are still living; and therefore I will be silent. At that time I was in such dark despair that I could no longer send cheerful, life-giving thoughts to Amely Skram, who was also fighting desperately against her fate. Our correspondence ceased, and a few years later Death too robbed us of this clever woman and

poetess. During that time of my deepest sorrow and anguish of heart there was a delightful meeting again with Björnstjerne and his high-minded wife Caroline. They were in Munich again for a short time, but I lived in a little villa a good way out of town, so that the old gentleman could not reach me so easily. I therefore inquired when I could visit him, and received the following reply :

MUNICH, 4/12/1897.

DEAR FRAU SCHEWITSCH—Come when you like—our meals are at twelve and five. I go for a walk now and then. Just send a card and I will stay at home. I understood everything by your letter. You, with your full heart always ready to think and hope for the best. I understand—I understand. Come here when you like, since I cannot come to you.—Yours most sincerely, BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON.

When I arrived there, and told them of my deep trouble, the two dear people wept with me ; and, in spite of Amely Skram's doubts, their noble and truly human sympathy helped to lighten the burden which lay so heavily on my sore heart. I am eternally grateful for this hour to Björnstjerne and his wife Caroline.

Yes, it was a delightful inspiring time when their family made Munich a sort of second home. It ended with the political contests of Albert Langens, Björnstjerne's son-in-law, who was editor of *Simplicissimus* when it first came out. My husband, persuaded by Björnstjerne, also contributed to this paper.

They all left for Paris and Norway, and even now I miss the charming people terribly.

Serge could not so easily adopt the tone of *Simplicissimus*, and if he had continued, might have exposed himself to serious unpleasantness on account of being a foreigner, and especially a Russian.

Therefore he dissolved his connection with the publication, and turned to other interests. He wrote a great deal for important papers—novels and political articles—also composed many plays, which were

performed with great success at various theatres, and which were brought out under a pseudonym.

One of these, *Tania*, fired Francisca Elmenreich and Katie Schratt with such enthusiasm, that both of them included it in their repertoire in America.

After many years' absence I met Franz von Lenbach once more during my last stay in Munich. We found him giving the finishing touches to his palatial residence in the Louisen Strasse. I had known him in his first modest beginnings, and he now showed me with great pride over the splendid building, in which, a short time previously, he had had the privilege of entertaining his deeply honoured Bismarck.

I was quite touched when I noticed his almost childish joy at the magnificence to which he had attained.

At that time electric lighting in private houses was something quite new. Lenbach had had it installed and, "What a beautiful white light. It shows up all the colours better than daylight," he said, proving it to us at once by drawing the curtains and demonstrating the difference. "If I paint in the evening, as I mostly do——" he added.

"Why do you paint at night?" I asked; "that is surely bad for your eyes."

"To earn bread and butter for wife and child," he answered laughingly, and pointing with his brush to his beautiful wife, who was just entering. It was his first wife, and at that time they were expecting the birth of their eldest daughter Marion (who arrived a few days later).

The master immortalised her later in many of his paintings, and, according to me, she had inherited all the delicate beauty of her mother, a beauty which possessed for me an infinite charm.

I had hoped to be able to show my husband a portrait which Lenbach had painted of me in my youth, and which, although it had never been very

like me, was extremely interesting, and represented me as I was in my twentieth year. However, the master confessed to me, a little hesitatingly, that he had sold it to a friend and admirer of mine, at his special request. There was nothing to be done.

A photograph of this portrait was published in 1887 by Paul Hennig in Berlin in the book entitled *The Sorrows of Lassalle.*

Yet a few words about the kindness of the great artist.

At a time when he was very ill I met one of his most intimate friends in society. The illness of the man, who was so dear to both our hearts, was of course the chief topic of our conversation. Our friend, who saw him daily, related how bravely he bore his illness and the presentiment of death, and added, "With his decease many a young artist will lose an ever-ready helper; one who never refused a request for assistance, and who responded bountifully to the same. How many thousands have passed through my hands alone for this purpose!"

A short time after this conversation the great and noble master departed this life. A talk I had once with him when he was in full vigour shows how simple and modest he had remained, in spite of the impression to the reverse he so often made on strangers. He asked me what my chief occupations were, for, he added, "I know of old that you are a wonderfully industrious woman, and are never idle."

"Theosophy!" I answered (I was then writing my book *Wie ich mein Selbst fand*).

"Oh, with old Indian philosophy!" he exclaimed at once.

I was surprised that he knew anything about it, for at that time very few people had a notion of it. I nodded affirmatively, and he continued, "That is nothing for me, for it demands asceticism and a deadening of the senses."

"Not before we are ripe for the same," I replied,

for the doctrine forbids us to act contrary to our nature, as nothing would be gained by it. Man is only fitted for the highest development after he has passed through all earthly experiences meant for him, not only in this life but in many lives and incarnations. To this certainly asceticism belongs.

"I am of the opinion of Schopenhauer and Humboldt," I added, "that the theosophical point of view—the knowledge of this wonderful philosophy—makes one happier and better, even when set in the midst of life, and when the deadening of the senses would be an impossibility."

Lenbach had listened very attentively and said, "Yes, perhaps. Very well, when I have time I shall be glad to occupy myself with such exalted things. Just now I have none, because of my painting here."

As usual, when one visited him in his studió, he had not put down palette or brush, and went on painting. He often used his visitor as a model, if only for little touches. "Not only my painting leaves me no time, but, as you know, I am an ignorant, unlettered man of peasant origin, and I devote every spare moment to making this good. I read nothing but the ancient classics, chiefly Greek and Roman, for I learn most from them. You see, I must first digest these before I attempt anything else,—like a schoolboy," he continued, laughing. I was touched by his simplicity, and the way the famous master spoke of his ignorance and willingness to learn. He was great enough not to fear smallness.

In addition to these celebrities, another great person entered my life during these last years, one who has often reminded me of Lenbach, in her amiable childlike simplicity and modesty, Helene Boehlau, Frau Al-Raschid Bey. When we first met in the houses of mutual friends we did not feel in the least attracted towards each other, but rather repelled, until we were both told that our natures had so many

things in common that we ought to meet more intimately, understand each other, and become closer friends. And this was true.

Helene Boehlau's strange husband was a German-Russian subject, and became a Turk (Al-Raschid Bey) in order to be able to marry the high-minded woman whom he dearly loved. In him I found a sympathetic friend. He is a philosopher, and although he objects to calling his philosophy and comparative religious sciences theosophy (a certain odium always attaches itself to this word), it is nevertheless extremely like it. Al-Raschid Bey has his peculiarities, one of which is, he always goes about in Turkish costume. Short-sighted people have made fun of this, but *I* understand that he uses it as a sort of symbol, or, better still, as a visible demonstration of the fact that he became, and is, a Turk, in order to be able to marry, honour, and protect his beloved wife. Helene Boehlau Al-Raschid Bey is quite a wonderful woman—well worth the sacrifice of fatherland and prejudices. German jurisdiction would have done better to allow exceptional circumstances to hold good for such an exceptional man, but this was not the case. I have no need to discuss here what Helene Boehlau is as author and poet, but to deal alone with the original and broad-minded woman. She was brought up in the city of Goethe, and nourished, so to say, on his traditions. She appears to me always as a relict of Goethe, she is so avid of beauty, so unconventional, so true and real. There is no pettiness in her nature, and no comprehension of smallness in others. Petty-minded people simply fall away from her, and leave no traces in her life. But she gathers round her everything that can satisfy her craving for art and beauty, every one who shows talent in any direction. She inspires them with her own enthusiasm, which is totally devoid of envy, and she finds a friendly word for every aspirant and an appreciative hand-pressure for every *arrivé*. Thus

she assembles in her house a circle of distinguished people, and Germany's greatest could consider it an honour to be admitted there.

In conclusion, I will touch on one more friendly meeting which took place at the Hôtel Bellevue in Dresden, where we were staying during our travels. While chatting at the table d'hôte I noticed that my *vis-à-vis*, a short, active-looking old gentleman, stared steadily at me. I looked at him, but he recalled no remembrance of any kind whatever to me. A neighbour said to him, "Ah, General, you here," just as I was asking my husband for a glass of water.

The old gentleman seized the water-bottle in front of him and said, "Allow me, Madam, to——"

The moment I heard his voice I exclaimed joyfully, "Korff!"

Quite moved, he stretched out both hands towards me and exclaimed, "Of course! I knew you the moment you came in, and have stared at you ever since, hoping you would recognise me. I beg your husband's pardon a thousand times, but" (turning to Serge) "my name is General Baron Korff, and I am one of your wife's oldest friends." We were soon all three in animated conversation. My old friend came to see me in the afternoon, and all that remained by which I could recognise the wild, brilliant Korff of the Berlin days was his charm of conversation and his shrewd sparkling eyes. The tall cavalier, who had been so proud of his elegant figure, was now a short, active, but rather stout old man. He was as gallant as ever, for when I went up to my drawing-room, after taking coffee in the garden, a lovely basket of roses awaited me with his card. Then he came himself, and we chatted for hours, conjuring up the old Berlin epoch of 1862-1868 interwoven with all its intellectual memories. We talked of Lassalle with sadness and deep sorrow, talked of all the friends who had met round the table in the

Bellevue Strasse, and of whom Korff had said that *he* was the only one who was not a celebrity.

I reminded him of a surprise he had once given me. I had returned from a stay in Berlin—it may have been in the year 1867—and on entering my *salon* I found an arrangement of plants, in the centre of which stood the wonderful bust of Ferdinand Lassalle by the great sculptor Begas, which I had long wished for. I could now thank the General for another proof of friendship, for since he had given me the bust I had not seen him again.

A pamphlet was to appear in the 'seventies that treated of Lassalle's death in a manner inimical to me—which at that time was nothing very unusual. Korff had found out that this one was especially vindictive and spiteful in tone, and my faithful friend had bought up the entire printed edition, caused it to be destroyed, and took steps to prevent its re-appearance. Only now was I able to express my gratitude to him for this, which I did, whilst pressing his old wrinkled hand.

We parted, and corresponded from time to time until his death. He sent me the reminiscences of his travels brightly and cleverly written. He continued his journeys, which extended almost over the entire globe, till within a short time of his demise, and he had the felicity of being able to say of himself in his seventy-fifth year: "I was never ill in my life, and never had any misfortunes in my life, except the pain of losing, through death, a few faithful friends." A privileged statement!

In speaking of this happy friend, let me conclude my memoirs by thanking all my other friends once more for every beautiful and inspiring hour which they have contributed to my life. They have assisted me to purer, higher development, and the memory of these dear ones glorifies the evening of my life even to its close.

CONCLUSION

Those who have wandered with me down the long road of my life, and who, I hope, have approached me in something of a friendly spirit, may allow me to repeat the question I placed at the beginning of my memoirs: "*Had* I anything to tell worthy of interest, which could help others over a dark hour?"

I say once more, "Yes, I hope so!" I think that one fact stands out in this very complicated life of mine, and that is, that no one need despair or lose courage.

Good human material will and *must* aspire to attain the light in spite of all hindrances, and the dark abysses of one's nature. These very hindrances and obscurities may, in a fundamentally healthy nature, be even a spur to overcome them and to rise more quickly when the sun beckons with its warmth. Heredity may prove a powerful adjunct; my Viking heritage, with all its drawbacks of wild passion, bestowed at the same time a certain initial force. Strength, coupled with love, is the highest attribute of the human soul—love in its ideal sense, undimmed by sensual passion, purified, and seeking to ally itself with the universal *Alliebe*.

As I to-day make a comprehensive survey of my life, with its clouded depths, its dark chasms, its flower-strewn valleys, its emancipated heights, through and over all of which my path lay, it presents itself to me as an entire whole. No smallest bypath, no most obscure little corner, and no sunniest spot must

be left unmentioned, for each one helps to bind together the continuity of my life, to forge my fate, and to lead logically to the building up of the development that formed my present individuality—myself.

I must confess that I agree with Weininger when he says that an eminent man is naturally more superstitious than a mediocre one. I believe that every being who crossed my path for good or ill had an influence on my ultimate *ego* and infinite development. I learnt something from every one—even the least of them, often consciously, more often unconsciously; sometimes only understanding the schooling after long years, sometimes even not to this hour.

It is not surprising that with this deeper comprehension the wider love of humanity has come over me, and constitutes my happiness. I have learnt to seek in all those who step into my circle only those qualities that can elevate and rejoice the soul—to ignore the lesser ones, and to act in accordance with these words of Goethe: "If we were always careful enough in uniting friends to us from *one* side, and this the one most harmonious to ourselves, without taking the rest of their being into consideration, then friendships would be far more lasting and continuous. But generally it is a fault of youth, and one we do not lay aside even in old age, that we seek another self in our friend, and demand of him that only when he is at one with us, should he be able to form an entire whole."

As Lord Avebury says: "Even if there is a skeleton in the cupboard, it is not the only thing there."

I try not to see the skeleton, but to look for beautiful things in the cupboard. I always find them, and am grateful for this, even if I have been reproached for a want of real knowledge of human nature. I am not anxious to have it, according to the usual conception of the term, for too often "knowledge of human nature" means that one should meet

every new acquaintance with mistrust, and presuppose everything bad of him, until one has absolute assurance of the contrary. I thank the gods that this sort of knowledge of human nature is entirely wanting in me. I would rather err a thousand times than do one single person an injustice. When, as in one or two cases, I have discovered that I *did* make a mistake, even then I bear no malice, but, in banishing the uncongenial one from my life, I strive to think that *I* was not suitable to *him*, and not that *he* was not suitable to *me*.

Herein lies the great art of life—to enjoy to the full the scent of the roses and all other gifts of nature, whilst carefully avoiding the thorns; not, however, being indignant because there *are* thorns; not to demand that people should be as we want them to be, but to love them as they are, and, realising how monotonous life would be if we were all alike, rather rejoice that their various aspects brighten and illuminate our lives by a thousand new colours and different forms. That constitutes the charm of existence; and in understanding the beauty and delight of human intercourse, I greet every new friend who enters my life to-day with the same enthusiasm as in my first youth, and with gratitude and strength I try to rivet our friendship. Many dear kind friends call this "warmth of heart" and "universal love," but *I* know it to be a form of egotism, and the true art of life, for it upholds me joyfully to the very end—that end which, for me, means the rising of the sun.

Hail to thee, O sun!

THE END

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